PROCEEDINGS,

&c.

PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

Society for Missions to Africa and the East,

INSTITUTED BY

MEMBERS OF THE ESTABLISHED CHURCH.

VOLUME THE FIRST.

FROM THE

FORMATION OF THE SOCIETY TO WHIT-TUESDAY, 1805.

LONDON:

PRINTED BY JAQUES AND CO. LOWER SLOANE STREET, CHELSEA,
AND C. WHITTINGHAM, DEAN STREET.

SOLD BY L. B. SEELEY, AVE MARIA LANE; J. HATCHARD, BOOKSELLER
TO THE QUEEN, PICCADILLY;
AND BY MR. JOHNSTON, CROW STREET, DUBLIN.

1801—1805.

3523

PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

Society for Missions to Africa and the East,

INSTITUTED BY

MEMBERS OF THE ESTABLISHED CHURCH.

FOR THE YEAR

FROM THE

FORMATION OF THE SOCIETY TO MIDSUMMER, 1812.

LONDON:
PRINTED BY BUTLER AND CO. DUKE STREET, CHELSEA,
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AND BY MR. JOHNSTON, CROW STREET, DUBLIN.

1801—1812.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

BY Order of the General Meeting, held on WHIT TUESDAY, 1804, *instead of the following words, contained in the XIIth Rule, p.* 17, *"Three Members of the General Committee shall go out annually, and their Places be filled up by Ballot;" the Rule was thus altered: "Three Members of the General Committee shall go out annually, at the Discretion of the said Committee, and the Vacancies be filled up, in conformity to the Sixth Rule." With this Alteration, the Rules given from p.* 15 *to p.* 20, *are to be considered as the present Standing Rules of the Society.*

ADVERTISEMENTS.

ACCOUNT

OF A

SOCIETY FOR MISSIONS

TO

AFRICA AND THE EAST,

INSTITUTED BY

MEMBERS OF THE ESTABLISHED CHURCH.

ACCOUNT

OF A

SOCIETY FOR MISSIONS,

&c.

Of all the blessings which God has bestowed upon mankind, the Gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ is the greatest. It is the sovereign remedy for all the evils of life, and the source of the most substantial and durable benefits.

Under its benign influence, the understanding is illuminated by the light of truth; pure and holy principles are implanted in the heart; the passions, those fruitful causes of vice and misery, are regulated; the whole conduct is reformed; peace reigns in the breast; and a well-founded hope beyond the grave soothes the sorrows of life. Fallen man becomes a new creature; happy in himself, fulfilling the will of his Maker, and living to his glory.

In *social* and *civil* life also, wherever the Gospel is cordially received, its benefits are equally experienced. The husband and wife, the father and son, the master and servant, at once learn from it their respective duties, and are disposed and enabled to fulfil them. Human intercourse is sweetened by the charity which it inculcates. A mild and equitable spirit is infused by it, into legislation and civil government. Rulers become the fathers of their people, and subjects cheerfully yield obedience. Civilization is promoted upon sure and permanent principles; and nations are taught by it to dwell in friendship with each other.

Such are the benefits, which Christianity is calculated to diffuse in the world; but these are its least blessings. It not only meliorates the state of man in society, but it saves his soul. It cancels his guilt, reconciles him to God, raises him from death to life, makes him an heir of the kingdom of heaven, and crowns him with glory and immortality.

A just conviction of the value of these

benefits has produced several Societies, for the more general diffusion of the Gospel; and lately zealous Christians, of various denominations, have laudably united to send Missionaries, to enlighten even the far distant islands of the South Sea with the knowledge of the truth.

In the CHURCH OF ENGLAND, two venerable Societies have long been engaged in the excellent design of propagating Christianity abroad. That for PROMOTING CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE has undertaken, though not professedly the object of its institution, 'the management of such charities as should be put into its hands, for the support and enlargement of the Protestant Mission, formerly maintained by the King of Denmark, at Tranquebar, in the East Indies;' and it has since extended its care to several other settlements, in that quarter of the world.*

'In the year 1701, King William the Third was graciously pleased, *to erect and settle a* CORPORATION, *with a perpetual succession,*

* *Vide* Report of that Society.

by the name of the Society FOR THE PROPAGATION OF THE GOSPEL IN FOREIGN PARTS; *for the receiving, managing, and disposing of the contributions of such persons, as would be induced to extend their charity, towards the maintenance of a learned and orthodox Clergy, and the making of such other provision as might be necessary, for the propagation of the Gospel in foreign parts: upon information, that, in many of our* PLANTATIONS, COLONIES, *and* FACTORIES, *beyond the seas, the provision for ministers was mean; and many other of our said Plantations, Colonies, and Factories, were wholly unprovided of a maintenance for ministers and the publick worship of God; and that, for lack of support and maintenance of such, many of his loving subjects wanted the administration of God's word and sacraments, and seemed to be abandoned to atheism and infidelity, and others of them to Popish superstition and idolatry.'*

In consequence of this incorporation, the Society proceeded to receive subscriptions; and, by the liberal benefactions afforded them, they have been enabled to supply, with ordained ministers and schoolmasters, many of our factories and colonies abroad; which else

would have been destitute of the publick worship of God, the administration of the sacraments, and almost of the knowledge of the Gospel. To the British Plantations in North America, they have principally extended their benevolent exertions. It is evident however, that although they have not been backward, wherever a proper opportunity has occurred, to instruct their Missionaries to embrace it, by preaching amongst the neighbouring Heathen; yet the primary and direct object of this Society, has been rather the religious benefit of the British Colonists, and those Heathens immediately dependent upon them, than the conversion of the Heathen in general.

Room, therefore, is still left for the institution of a Society, which shall consider the Heathen as its principal care. The whole Continent of AFRICA, and that of ASIA also, (with the exception of a few places,) are still open to the Missionary labours of the Church of England. To these quarters of the globe, therefore, the promoters of the present design turn their chief attention; and from this extensive field they assume their denomina-

tion; not however considering their name as binding them to exclude their attempts from any other unoccupied place, which may present a prospect of success to their labours.

A difficulty has occurred, in establishing Missions, according to the regular constitution of the Church of England, which it is necessary to state, in order to justify a part of the present Institution, which might else appear exceptionable. It is obvious, that the Church of England can allow no persons to officiate, in any respect, as Ministers, who have not been *episcopally ordained*. Episcopal ordination, bearing respect to the present improved state of society in this island, is justly conferred upon those only, whose education and learning qualify them for the rank, which the English clergy hold in society. It is evident, however, that a Missionary, dwelling amongst savages rude and illiterate, does not require the same kind of talents, manners, or learning, as are necessary in an officiating minister in England.—But ordination admits not of distinctions correspondent to the degree of refinement in society. He who is once episcopally ordained, though with the sole view

of acting as a Missionary to the Heathen, would possess the power of officiating, and holding any benefice to which he might be presented, in the English Church. This circumstance necessarily requires extreme caution, in ordaining persons for the purposes of Missions only. For, what security can be afforded, that a person of inferior station, offering himself upon this ground for orders, is not influenced by the desire of a more elevated rank in society, or of a life of greater ease, rather than by a pure zeal for the salvation of the Heathen?

To obviate this difficulty, which lies in the way of sending Missionaries episcopally ordained, the conductors of the present Institution have recourse to the expedient, of sending their Missionaries in the capacity of *Catechists* only; where persons already in holy orders do not offer themselves, or circumstances do not justify an application for regular ordination.

The office of a Catechist*, in the Primitive Church, was exercised by any of the inferior

* Bingham's Eccl. Ant. B. III. c. 10. §. 1, 2. Bishop on the Catechism.

Ecclesiasticks*. It was his business 'to address in continued discourses the Gentiles or unconverted Jews, in behalf of the Christian doctrine,—to expose the folly and absurdity of the Pagan superstition,—to remove prejudices, and to answer objections.—He also instructed those who had embraced the Christian faith, but had not a sufficient knowledge thereof to qualify them for baptism; who were, therefore, only admitted Catechumens, which was done, in process of time, with great solemnity, by the imposition of hands; whereupon they were esteemed a sort of Christians, and were divided into several classes.'

Catechists were thus esteemed as candidates, under trial and probation for the greater orders; and the Church took this method to train up fit persons for the ministry, first exercising them in the lower offices, that they might be

* Clemens Romanus plainly distinguishes the Catechist from the Bishops, Presbyters, and Deacons; for comparing the church to a ship, he says, the Bishop resembles the τρωρευς or pilot, the Presbyters the ναυλαι or mariners, the Deacons the τοιχαρχοι or chief rowers, and the Catechists the ναυλολογοι, or those whose office it was to admit passengers into the ship and contract with them for their passage.

the better disciplined and qualified for the duties of the superior functions.

The utility of employing Catechists has, indeed, been experienced in all missions. The Missionaries, employed by the SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE, have selected some of the ablest of their converts, and employed them as Catechists, with singular benefit to the Christian cause. We tread, therefore, in a beaten path, when we follow these examples. Catechists, indeed, appear to be, in several respects, the most suitable persons, to plant the Gospel among the Heathen; and, when such have approved themselves as faithful labourers in the vineyard, when they have instructed the children of the Heathen, when they have laid the foundations of a Christian church, there may be just ground for application to admit them, if necessary, into a higher order.

Other particulars, respecting the present Institution, will be understood by the annexed Rules, and the Report of the Committee.—It will be seen, that scrupulous care has been

taken to insure, as much as possible, a right choice of Missionaries; for, upon their fitness for the work depends, under God, the whole success. The Committee, to whom the choice of them is entrusted, may indeed be deceived: but it will be their aim to recommend such only, as unite a fervent zeal with discretion and knowledge; such as have themselves experienced the benefits of the Gospel, and, therefore, earnestly desire to make known to their perishing fellow sinners, the grace and power of a Redeemer, and the inestimable blessings of his salvation.—It is scarcely necessary to add, that, as members of the Church of England, they consider its doctrinal articles as exhibiting the standard of that faith, which it should be their endeavour to propagate.

It remains now, only to solicit the assistance of all those, who have the glory of God and the good of their fellow creatures at heart, for the furtherance of this useful design. Wide is the field, which lies before this Society; great is the importance of their object. They require not, indeed, the pecuniary aid of those,

who already, to the extent of their power, contribute to the support of other similar institutions—of all such persons they regard it as the duty, to continue undiminished the support they have hitherto given. What they ask of them is their counsel, their good wishes, their prayers. Let not this Society be considered, as opposing any that are engaged in the same excellent purpose. The world is an extensive field, and in the Church of Christ there is no competition of interests. From the very constitution of the human mind, slighter differences of opinion will prevail, and diversities in external forms; but, in the grand design of promoting Christianity, all these should disappear. Let there be cordial union amongst all Christians, in promoting the common salvation of their Lord and Saviour.

With a firm reliance on the divine blessing, and confidence in the piety and liberality of Britons for the support of their undertaking; the conductors of the present Institution embark in their work without fear, though not without solicitude. They hope, that, since God has so signally defended this Island with

his mercy as with a shield, his gracious hand, to which, amidst the wreck of nations, our safety has been owing, will by us be acknowledged, and his goodness gratefully recorded, even in distant lands. They pray, that, while every country under Heaven brings the tribute of its stores to Great Britain, she may return to them treasures more valuable than silver and gold. They trust, that the wrongs, which Africa has so long sustained, will at length be repaired, by the offerings of spiritual peace and Christian freedom. They expect, that the petitions daily offered up by the Church, that "the kingdom of God may come," will, in time, be answered; and they hail the rising day, when the glad tidings of Salvation, being conveyed to the lands lying in darkness and the shadow of death, "the wilderness and "the solitary place shall be glad for them, "and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as "the rose."

RULES.

I.

EVERY person subscribing annually the sum of one guinea, shall be deemed a Member of this Society, during the continuance of his subscription.

II.

Every person giving a benefaction of twenty guineas, shall be a Member for life.

III.

Any clergyman subscribing annually half a guinea, shall be considered as a Member.

IV.

An annual meeting of the Members of the Society, shall be held in London on Tuesday in Whitsun week; of which, and of the place of meeting, due notice shall be given.

V.

There shall be elected, by ballot, seven Governors and a Treasurer.

VI.

A GENERAL COMMITTEE shall be appointed, to superintend the affairs of the Society, consisting of the Governors,

Treasurer, and also of twenty-four other Members, (of whom not less than twelve shall be Ministers of the Established Church,) elected by ballot. Every General or Committee Meeting shall be opened, by some clergyman present, using a form of prayer composed for that purpose.

VII.

The General Committee shall elect from themselves, by ballot, six Ministers and three Laymen, to be a COMMITTEE OF CORRESPONDENCE; and shall choose five other Members, to form a COMMITTEE OF ACCOUNTS.

VIII.

The office of the COMMITTEE OF CORRESPONDENCE is, to seek for proper Missionaries, to superintend their instruction, and to correspond with them when sent out.

IX.

The office of the COMMITTEE OF ACCOUNTS is, to receive subscriptions, regulate the accounts, and undertake the charge of fitting-out and conveying the Missionaries to the place of their destination.

X.

The GENERAL COMMITTEE shall receive the Reports of the other Committees; shall appoint the places, where Missions shall be attempted; shall direct the scale, upon which they shall be conducted; and shall superintend the affairs of the Society in general. The Members of the Committees of Correspondence and Accounts, shall always be considered as Members of this Committee.

XI.

The General Committee shall meet every first Monday in the month: The other Committees, as often and in such place as shall be by them agreed upon. Each shall keep minutes of their proceedings, and shall make reports to the General Committee. Five shall be necessary to compose a General Committee, and three each of the others. In case of equality of votes, the determination to rest with the Chairman.

XII.

Three Members of the General Committee shall go out annually, and their places be filled up by ballot. This regulation shall not, however, extend to the Governors, Treasurer, or to the Members of the Committee of Correspondence.—A Member of the General Committee may be re-elected, after being out one year.—When a vacancy happens in the Committee of Correspondence, the remaining Members shall propose a Candidate, who shall be accepted or rejected by the General Committee.

XIII.

The Committee of Correspondence may propose to the General Committee any number of Ministers or others, resident in either of the two Universities, or elsewhere in the country, at the distance of more than ten miles from the metropolis, to be elected COUNTRY MEMBERS of the Committee. With these the Committee of Correspondence shall communicate; and, when they are in London, they shall have the liberty of attending the meetings of the General Committee and of voting in them.

XIV.

In the APPOINTMENT OF A MISSIONARY the following course shall be pursued.—The Committee of Correspondence, having found a person supposed to be suitable, shall determine by ballot to nominate him to the General Committee. Previous to the day of nomination, each Member of the General Committee shall receive notice that a Missionary will be proposed. On the day of nomination a report shall be made by some Member of the Committee of Correspondence of his qualifications, and the General Committee shall then proceed to ballot for him, unless any Member should declare that he wishes for further information; in which case the ballot shall be deferred till the next meeting of the Committee. In the ballot of either Committee, the agreement of at least three fourths of the Members present shall be necessary to his election.

XV.

A Missionary thus elected shall receive instruction in such parts of knowledge, and be prepared in such a manner for his future employment, as the Committee of Correspondence shall judge expedient.

XVI.

If during such preparation, any two Members of the General Committee should see cause to disapprove of his principles or conduct, they may require the revisal of his appointment at their next Meeting (of which special notice shall be given to each Member,) and a ballot shall again take place in the same manner as before.

XVII.

Each Missionary elect shall consider himself as engaged to go to any part of the world, and at any time, which the Committee shall choose, respect however being had to his personal circumstances, or to any previous stipulation made by him with the Society. As soon as he quits England, he shall keep a regular Journal of his studies and proceedings, a copy of which he shall send, as often as opportunity shall serve, to the Committee of Correspondence.

XVIII.

A Missionary appointed by the Society, (if not already ordained,) shall consider himself only as a CATECHIST. Should it please God to bless his labours with success in founding a Christian Church, it is proposed, either that he should be sent for, and application humbly made for him to be episcopally ordained to the charge of it, in case he should be found a proper person; or else that some person in holy orders should be sent out, to superintend it and to administer the Sacraments.

XIX.

An anniversary Sermon shall be preached at some Church in London, by a Minister appointed by the General Committee, on the morning of the day on which the annual Meeting of the Society is held. An annual report of the Society shall be printed for the use of its Members.

XX.

A friendly intercourse shall be maintained with other Protestant Societies, engaged in the same benevolent design of propagating the gospel of Jesus Christ.

XXI.

'It is recommended to every Member of the Society 'to pray to Almighty God for a blessing upon its de- 'signs; under the full conviction, that unless he prevent 'us in all our doings with his most gracious favour and 'further us with his continual help,' we cannot reasonably hope to meet with persons of a proper spirit and qualifications to be Missionaries, or expect their endeavours to be crowned with success.

LIST

OF THE

GOVERNORS AND COMMITTEE.

GOVERNORS.

Vice Admiral GAMBIER.
CHARLES GRANT, Esq.
Sir RICHARD HILL, Bart. M. P.
HENRY HOARE, Esq.
EDWARD PARRY, Esq.
SAMUEL THORNTON, Esq. M. P.
WILLIAM WILBERFORCE, Esq. M. P.

TREASURER.

HENRY THORNTON, Esq. M. P.

COMMITTEE.

Rev. William Jarvis Abdy, St. John's, Horsley Down.
—— Samuel Crowther, Bartholomew Close.
—— Edward Cuthbert, Hatton-garden.
—— John Davies, Queen-square, Westminster.
—— Henry Foster, Wilderness-row.
—— William Goode, Blackfriars.

Rev. John Newton, Coleman-street.
—— Dr. Peers, St. George's Place, Surrey-road.
—— Josiah Pratt, Doughty-street.
—— Thomas Scott, Upper Grosvenor-place.
—— John Venn, Clapham.
—— H. G. Watkins, Pentonville.
—— Basil Woodd, Paddington.
Mr. John Barber, Denmark Hill.
Mr. John Brasier, Camberwell.
Mr. William Cardale, Bedford-row.
Mr. Nathan Downer, Bishop-gate-street.
Mr. Charles Elliot, New Bond-street.
Mr. Zachary Macauley, Birchin-lane.
Mr. Ambrose Martin, Finch-lane.
Mr. John Pearson, Golden-square.
Mr. Henry Stokes, Hatton-garden.
Mr. Edward Venn, Bow-lane.
Mr. William Wilson, Milk-street.

Rev. THOMAS SCOTT, Secretary.

A

SERMON

PREACHED

AT SAINT ANNE's, BLACKFRIARS,

BEFORE

THE SOCIETY.

By the Revd. Thos. Scott

Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature: he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned.——MARK xvi. 16.

How then shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? Or how shall they hear without a preacher? Or how shall they preach except they be sent?——ROM. x. 14, 15.

A

SERMON, &c.

Ephes. ii. 12.

At that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world.

OF all the times, in which during many years I have been called to exercise my ministry, the present appears to me by far the most arduous and important: as it not only has respect to the eternal condition of the individuals which compose this auditory, and their immediate connexions; but as it is also especially intended to recommend an institution, which, though small in its beginnings, may, if properly conducted, and adequately supported, and graciously prospered, extend its beneficial consequences to remote regions and future ages. So that multitudes of whom we know nothing, nay, who have not yet received an existence, may ultimately be concerned in the present service.

If the blessings, derived from Christianity, are so deeply needed, and so inestimably valuable, as its zealous friends suppose the Scriptures to represent them: genuine philanthropy alone might, one would suppose, induce us to communicate them, if possible, to such as still "sit in darkness and the shadow of "death." But besides the benumbing power of selfishness in its varied forms, and disregard to God and religion, compared with what are judged the personal or political interests of mankind; infidelity has diffused it's contagion even among Christians; and the anti scriptural sentiment, that heathens, and Mahometans, and Jews, may be saved by their religions, if sincere in them, as well as Christians by their's, has cut the very sinews of exertion, and led men to undervalue the very Gospel itself. But if this sentiment be true, why were apostles and evangelists sent forth to preach to all nations? To what purpose their labours, sufferings, and martyrdom? For what were they so zealous and earnest? Did they, or did they not, consider all men, of every nation, exposed to the wrath of God, under condemnation, and in danger of everlasting misery, from which they could not possibly be delivered, except by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ? If this was their judgment, they acted consistently; and if this "judgment was "according to truth," they acted with genuine wisdom and disinterested philanthropy, as well as ardent zeal for the glory of God. The language of their conduct may be expressed in the words of the

apostle; "The same Lord over all is rich unto all "that call upon him: for whosoever shall call on "the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then "shall they call on him, on whom they have not "believed? And how shall they believe in him of "whom they have not heard? And how shall they "hear without a preacher? And how shall they "preach except they be sent? As it is written, "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet "of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring "glad tidings of good things!—So that faith cometh "by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." And "without faith it is impossible to please God." But if this were not their view of the subject, their whole conduct is perfectly unaccountable: if they erred in judgment, they were left to act in a manner suited to mislead all men, through successive generations, who should look up to them as declaring the will of God to man, and illustrating it by their example. And who can help perceiving that this sentiment both represents the apostles as enthusiasts and bigots; and impeaches the wisdom of Christ himself in sending them forth into the world?

That avowed infidels should admit these conclusions, is not at all wonderful: but that an opinion so derogatory to the honour of Christ, and even if carried to its consequences subversive of Christianity, should obtain favour among the friends of our holy religion,

and influence their practice, can be ascribed to nothing but the extreme deceitfulness of the human heart; and the deep subtlety of Satan, who thus endeavours to retain his destructive sway, without disturbance from the disciples of him, who came to destroy his works and subvert his kingdom.

Before we proceed to examine the judgment of the apostle, I would make a few remarks on the charge of *uncharitableness*, and even *malevolence*, which is brought against those, who in this respect undoubtedly "speak according to the oracles of "God." Our opinions, concerning the eternal condition of our fellow-men, will not alter that condition, whether we groundlessly presume that they are safe, or needlessly tremble lest they should perish everlastingly: but our judgment, in many cases, will influence our conduct; and groundless confidence may induce a ruinous inactivity, while needless fears can only prompt us to self-denying exertions, which in that case might have been spared. Nor do our opinions necessarily accord to our desires and wishes; nay they are very commonly at direct variance with them. Jeremiah was most deeply convinced that the terrible vengeance of God was about to be poured out on his country; and he was accused as an enemy to his nation, and a traitor to his prince, because he faithfully shewed them their danger: yet he could appeal to the Searcher of

hearts, that he " had not desired the woeful day ;" " he wept in secret places for their pride ;" he continued to pray for them after repeated interdictions from God ; he seemed to dread nothing more than to see his character as a true prophet completely proved ; and after all his sufferings from his ungrateful people, he preferred a lot among the impoverished remains of them, to the proferred favour of Babylon's victorious monarch.

The time would fail to insist on the judgment and conduct of St. Paul respecting the unbelieving Jews, whose doom he constantly predicted, yet declared that he " could wish himself accursed from " Christ," (or, after the manner of Christ,) to prevent it !—But the example of our Lord himself, weeping over the very city the awful destruction of which he foretold and denounced, might, one *would have supposed*, have for ever silenced Christians from charging the opinions of their brethren, respecting the lost condition either of their neighbours, or the heathen, on their want of charity ; and ascribing the opposite sentiment to an excess of *benevolence* and *candour !* Yet we risk nothing in avowing, that, not only do almost all exertions to promote the gospel, originate with such as hold the *uncharitable* sentiment, and owe their principal support to them : but that they do far more than their proportion according to their ability, in relieving the temporal distresses of mankind !

Whatever we may hope or fear, the heathen either are "perishing for lack of knowledge," or they are not: and it is very strange that *love* should in this instance lead men to that very conduct, which, if adopted by a parent towards a child even supposed to be in urgent danger, would be ascribed to brutal selfishness and want of natural affection! And that *malevolence* should dictate those anxious fears, and expensive self-denying exertions, which in any case, immediately affecting the health or temporal safety of others, would be looked upon as indubitable proofs of strong affection and tender solicitude!

These hints premised, I proceed to shew—

I. The judgment of the apostle concerning the state of the heathen, as it may be gathered from the text; with illustrations of the subject, and remarks upon it.

II. To consider the duties incumbent on us in this respect, and to enquire how far we have criminally neglected them.

III. To suggest some hints, respecting the performance of these duties. And

IV. To conclude with a few particulars respecting this Society.

I. Then, I would shew the judgment of the apostle concerning the state of the heathen, as it may be gathered from the text; with illustrations of the subject, and remarks upon it.

In the preceding part of the chapter, the apostle shews the character and condition of unconverted sinners in general. "You hath he quickened, who "were dead in trespasses and sins; wherein in time "past ye walked, according to the course of this "world, according to the prince of the power of the "air, the spirit that now worketh in the children "of disobedience. Among whom also we all had "our conversation in times past, in the lusts of our "flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the "mind, and were by nature the children of wrath, "even as others." In this passage he evidently includes both Jews and Gentiles, and the whole body of the Christian church, as considered in themselves, before that "God, who is rich in mercy, "for his great love wherewith he loved them, even "when dead in sin, had quickened them together "with Christ." But he afterwards thus addresses, in particular, the converts made from among the heathen; "Wherefore remember, that ye, being "in time passed Gentiles in the flesh, who are called "the uncircumcision, by that which is called the "circumcision in the flesh made by hands; that at "that time ye were without Christ, being aliens "from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers

" from the covenants of promise, having no hope and " without God in the world." They had been, in their external situation, under vastly greater disadvantages, and at a much farther distance from God and salvation, than the Jews. " But now in Christ " Jesus, ye who were sometime far off are made " nigh by the blood of Jesus." And it is evident, that a similar difference subsists at this day, between professed Christians, and those who have not the external means of grace and salvation.

The Messiah had been promised from the very first entrance of sin, as " the Seed of the woman, " who should bruise the serpent's head:" but this promise, at least in its spiritual meaning, was little known, except among the remnant that adhered to the worship of the true God; and in a short time after the deluge, idolatry became almost universal. To check in some degree its destructive progress, God was pleased to call Abraham, and to enter into covenant with him and his posterity by Isaac and Jacob; especially in respect of the promised Saviour, in whom all nations were at length to be blessed: but the rest of the human race, with but few exceptions, seem very soon to have lost almost entirely, even that traditional recollection of the promise concerning him, which they might have derived from Adam and Noah: for that confused expectation of a Messiah, which prevailed near the time of his coming, evidently appears to have been gathered

from the Jewish Scriptures, that had been translated into the Greek language some time before, and widely disseminated in the adjacent countries; which, by the way, was evidently designed in Providence to facilitate the propagation of the Gospel, and proved no inconsiderable advantage to the apostles and evangelists.—The ceremonial law of Moses was a shadow of good things to come, and its ordinances were means of grace by which many believed and were saved. The oracles of God, entrusted to Israel, and all the prophets sent among them, shewed the coming of Christ, his sufferings, and the glory that should follow. The Lord ratified his covenants with them; the Sinai-covenant with the people in general; the Abrahamick covenant, as relating to the blessings of salvation, with all believers; the covenant of the priesthood with Aaron's family; and that of the kingdom with David and his family, to be fulfilled at length in that of the Messiah as descended from him.

But all this time the Gentiles were "aliens from "the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from "the covenants of promise." Especially they were *without Christ*, or in all respects *separated* from him. No explicit promises or revelation concerning him had ever reached their ears; and as faith must rest on divine revelation, they had no ground for believing in him. They had no ordinances administered among them, as prefiguring his salvation, and the way of the

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sinner's access to God, through his atoning blood and intercession; or representing the sanctification of the heart by his holy Spirit. No prophets were sent to instruct them: no covenant was made with them: and in general, they knew nothing, and had little opportunity of learning any thing, concerning 'the in-'estimable benefit of redemption by Christ;' they were favoured with no 'means of grace,' and were therefore without 'the hope of glory.'—And does not every one perceive, that all these particulars are equally true, concerning the nations which still remain strangers to Christianity?

According to the apostle, the Gentiles "had *no* "*hope*." When the woman of Samaria enquired of our Lord, whether the Jews or the Samaritans worshipped God aright, he answered, "Ye worship "ye know not what, we know what we worship; for "*salvation* is of the Jews." If then, by the express testimony of Christ himself, the Samaritans, who were not gross idolaters, "knew not what they wor-"shipped;" because they did not adhere to those ritual appointments, which represented JEHOVAH as a just God and a Saviour, through the promised Messiah and his redemption; it must follow that the Gentiles, being *without Christ*, have likewise *no hope*. With whatever speculations some few philosophical men amused themselves and others, concerning the Deity and the immortality of the soul; or whatever expectations they formed of happiness after death; it is evident that they had nothing

worthy to be called *hope*. In general they had no fixed belief of that future state, about which they speculated; they knew scarcely any thing concerning the happiness or misery which there awaits every human being; or what preparation of heart was requisite, even, to the *enjoyment* of happiness, could they have been admitted into the regions of the blessed. Uncertainty rested on all their reasonings, which had no abiding good effect on their practice. The love of this present world was the main spring of all their actions; their confidence of the divine favour was the result of ignorance and proud self-flattery; and so they lived and died, not indeed without *presumption*, but without any *well-grounded hope* of future happiness. For every *warranted* hope of this kind must be derived from divine revelation. "Life and immortality are brought to light by the "Gospel;" which fully assures us of a future and eternal state of retributions; and shews us the only way of escaping everlasting punishment and obtaining everlasting felicity. The plan of salvation, through the redemption of the Son of God, and sanctification by the holy Spirit, is clearly revealed. The *object* of hope, and the *ground* of hope, are set before us in the gospel; the means of grace are appointed; and all who believe, and wait on the Lord in the honest use of these means, are assuredly made partakers of the blessing. So that the poorest and most illiterate true believer can give a vastly clearer and more intelligent account, and *solid reason*,

of his hope of happiness in a future world; than the whole company of ancient Pagan philosophers, and modern infidels together, ever did or ever can give: while his character proves that it is *hope* and not *presumption*; "for every man that has this hope in "him, purifieth himself, even as his Lord and "Saviour is pure."

In the judgment of the apostle, the Gentiles were also "*without God* in the world," or *atheists*, for so the word signifies. Not that they were in general *avowed* atheists; for indeed very few of them were. Yet the expression must denote more, than that they lived as if there had been no God: for this might with equal truth have been said of numbers among the Jews; and it now may be asserted of vast multitudes who are called Christians. The meaning evidently is, that the idols which the heathen adored, were in all respects unworthy to be called God: as the apostle reasons in other places. "When ye knew not God, ye did service to them "which by nature are no gods[1]." "An idol is no-"thing in the world, and there is no other God but "one: for though there be, that are called gods, "whether in heaven or in earth; (as there be gods "many and lords many;) but to us there is but one "God, the Father, of whom are all things and we in "him, and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all "things and we by him[2]."—In one view the idols of

[1] Gal. iv. 8. [2] 1 Cor. viii. 4—6.

the Gentiles were nothing but " gold, silver, and " stone, graven by art and man's device;" in another, they were demons, or the departed spirits of men, commonly very bad men; and in another, their idolatry was in fact the worship of satan and his angels. For " the things which the Gentiles sacri- " fice they sacrifice to devils and not to God, and " I would not that ye should have fellowship with " devils." Hence it is that satan is called the god, as well as the prince, of this world; being the grand, though concealed, object of religious worship to mankind in general, as well as their lord and tyrant; " For we know (says the apostle) that the whole " world lieth in wickedness," or rather *in the wicked one*; and " the old serpent, called the devil and " satan," (or *Abaddon*, *Apollyon*, the *destroyer*,) " has " deceived the whole world."

Thus the religion of the Gentiles, so far from honouring God, was in his sight the most detestable of all their abominations: and it should be carefully observed, that the word *abomination* is used in Scripture for *idolatry*, more frequently than for any other crime, or indeed all other crimes taken together; and therefore the apostle declared idolaters to be without *excuse*, however it be at present fashionable to *excuse* them. The two first commandments in the law are expressly made against the two grand species of idolatry.—" Jealousy is the rage of a man:" yet this vehement indignation and deep resentment

is ascribed to God, respecting idolatry, when he calls himself repeatedly a *jealous* God. He will not give his glory to another; and the most indignant severity of language is used against all idolatry and idolaters: not to authorize us to persecute or hate them; but to caution us against all approaches to so provoking a crime, and to excite our compassion towards the poor Gentiles, and to animate our exertions, to recover them from the horrid and deplorable worship and service of the devil, in which they are at present sunk.

All the Gentiles without exception were and are idolaters, and consequently "without God in the "world;" for the few instances mentioned in Scripture of pious persons without the church of Israel, (such as Job and some others,) were not Gentiles in this sense of the word, though they lived among them. Even the philosophers, whose writings are now extolled, with an evident intention of depreciating the oracles of God; while they speculated about a supreme Being, conformed, and taught others to conform, to the prevailing gross idolatry; (perhaps with the solitary exception of Socrates, and it is doubtful whether he can be excepted.) And most of them reasoned themselves into some refined species of atheism or other, so that they too were atheists in the world; for "Professing themselves wise they "became fools."

The characters of the imaginary Pagan deities, drawn by selfish and licentious poets, to please sanguinary tyrants, ambitious conquerors, luxurious nobles, or a profligate multitude, were completely suited to sanction, or even consecrate, the most detestable vices, and to render the worshippers vile in proportion as they became zealous. The ordinances, in which they served these filthy demons, combined every thing pompous, jovial, and sensual, and often the most unnatural barbarities. Their temples were the recesses of debauchery, and their priests and priestesses, in general, the most shameless wretches that ever disgraced human nature. So that, besides the direct criminality of giving the glory of God to creatures, which inevitably implies the basest ingratitude, rebellion, and contempt; all kinds of wickedness were *cultivated*, with great success, by such a religion. Savage cruelty, fraud and imposture, gross debauchery, and every species of immorality, flourished, as in a fertile well cultured soil, in proportion as their religion was earnestly attended on. And this explains the apostle's reasoning in the first chapter of Romans, in which he considers the most detestable vices as, through the just judgment of God, springing from the idolatry of the Gentiles, as from their genuine source. Whether we consult the Scriptures, or the writings of ancient idolaters, we shall form the same judgment of the character of the Gentiles: provided we estimate it by the perfect standard of the divine law; and not by the erro-

neous principles and defective rules, which sinners have invented for themselves; according to which they "call evil good, and good evil; they put "darkness for light, and light for darkness; sweet "for bitter, and bitter for sweet."

The sacred writers speak of the Gentiles, as having "the understanding darkened, being alienated from "the life of God, through the ignorance that is in "them, because of the *hardness* of their hearts; who, "being past feeling, have given themselves over "unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with "greediness."—"For it is a shame even to speak "of those things which are done of them in secret." "For the time past," says St. Peter, "of our lives "may suffice to have wrought the will of the Gen-"tiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, "excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and "abominable idolatries; wherein they think it "strange that ye run not with them to the same "excess of riot, speaking evil of you." And every mention of the character, born by Gentile converts in their heathen state, implies an excess of immorality as well as impiety. "Be not deceived; nei-"ther fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor "effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with man-"kind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, "nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the "kingdom of God: and such were some of you."— "Mortify therefore your members which are upon "the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate

" affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness " which is idolatry; for which things sake the " wrath of God cometh on the children of dis- " obedience; in the which *ye also walked some-* " *time*, when ye lived in them." Surely such persons were in themselves " vessels of wrath fitted for " destruction." In short, what passage can be cited, from either the Old or New Testament, which, fairly interpreted, gives us any better opinion of the heathen world at large, or of any nation in it, whether civilized or barbarous?

I need not quote at large the well known dreadful representation, which the apostle Paul has drawn of idolaters in general, in the first chapter of his epistle to the Romans: but I will venture to say, that one altogether as horrid might be formed from the most admired writers of the Greeks and Romans, and almost in their very words. Sometimes indeed a satyrist inveighs against the atrocious vices of his neighbours, with an indignant severity: but far more commonly the most nefarious practices are spoken of with little commotion or reprehension, and often in a playful strain of jocularity. To write of the most heinous crimes imaginable, with calm indifference, as *things of course*, is an awful proof how low the standard of virtue was fixed, and how deplorably men's principles and consciences were depraved. The manner in which, not merely fornication and adultery, but even unnatural practices, are spoken of, is more emphatically impressive on

the serious mind that "all flesh had corrupted his "way upon the earth," than the most vehement exclamations, or bitter invectives, could be: for these would shew that some sense of right and wrong remained in men's consciences; but the other evinces that they were past feeling. The astonishing cruelty of many thousands butchered every year in the gladiatorial shews, to amuse Roman senators and ladies; the savage and sanguinary measures generally adopted in war, which was always honourable if successful; the custom of sometimes massacreing the captives, and generally selling them for slaves, with scarcely a remonstrance from moralists and philosophers; the extreme barbarity with which slaves were treated, and sometimes murdered by great numbers at once, lest they should prove too powerful for their oppressors; the very common practice of exposing infants *;

* Terence, not one of the most immoral of the Roman poets, introduces a young gentleman, who had a mistress, supposed to be a slave, by whom he had a son. This son he meant to bring up; and on that account he is represented as a *prodigy*, not of natural affection or compassion, but of madness and folly! Had he murdered the babe, all had been very well.

——— Gravida e Pamphilo est:
Audireque eorum, est operæ pretium, audaciam,
Nam inceptio est amentium, haud amantium,
Quicquid peperisset, decreverunt tollere.

ANDR. act. i. sc. 3.

To be sure it is a slave, into whose mouth this sentence is put: but a poet, intimately acquainted with the chief nobility in Rome, would not have introduced any one speaking in this style, if the conduct censured had not been contrary to the established maxims and practice in that renowned city:

and all the system of rapine, fraud, and oppression, by which the Romans supported the most astonishing prodigality and sensuality, are too notorious to be denied, and too detestable to be excused. Nor does it appear, that the lower orders were at all better, except as they had it not in their power to gratify their lusts to so great an excess. In short, the history of the several gentile nations as handed down to us by pagan writers, when compared with the divine law, and divested of the false colourings with which it is commonly exhibited, is the most striking comment imaginable, on the scriptural doctrine of human depravity, and of satan's tyranny over our fallen race. Can we then wonder that the apostle should say of them "without Christ, without hope, "and without God in the world?"—"Darkness co-"vered the earth," and "the dark places of the "earth were the habitations of cruelty" and of every abomination; till Christ sent his ministers "to open "men's eyes, and to turn them from darkness to "light, and from the power of satan unto God, "that they might receive forgiveness of sins, and "an inheritance among them that are sanctified, by "faith in him."

It has indeed become customary to admire the virtues of the ancient heathens: but no impartial man can deny, that the eulogiums passed on them contradict, not only Scripture, but the testimony of pagan writers; for very few indeed can be mentioned,

even among their philosophers, who would in this country be deemed so much as moral characters, when the whole recorded concerning them was fairly investigated. In general their virtues, defectively as they delineate them, were only found in their declamations and writings, and were scarcely at all visible in their lives.

In like manner several modern travellers (who, by the help of their coadjutors the infidels, have often seemed to labour at proving that Christianity is useless or needless,) have launched out in commendation of the virtuous Hindoos, Chinese, or inhabitants of the South-sea islands: yet, it is undeniable, that the more these have been known, the fuller has been the proof, that they are exceedingly prone to vices of every kind; as well as given up to idolatry, or sunk in total ignorance concerning God and religion. So that it would not be very difficult to shew, *from respectable testimony,* that with variations arising from external circumstances, the character, drawn by the apostles of the ancient heathen, is realized, as to all its grand outlines, in that of modern pagans. And even the Mahometans are not far, if at all, behind them; for though they do not present to our view altars reeking with human sacrifices, (vast numbers of which are still offered in divers parts of the world;) or with the grosser abominations of idolatry: yet the excessive licentiousness indulged by them, even on the principles of their

detestable religion, in imitation of their debauched prophet, and in expectation of more refined sensuality in their promised paradise, are scarcely less shocking to the serious mind; especially as connected with the principle, that this paradise is secured to those who die in battle, attempting, by blood and slaughter, to propagate these licentious tenets!

On what ground then, can a Christian conclude, that men, thus universally sunk in idolatry or the basest superstition, and in all kinds of vice and immorality, till they have almost obliterated the very sense of right and wrong, can be entitled to the reward of everlasting happiness, or meet for the enjoyment of its holy delights, without "repentance towards "God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ?" Certainly neither the promises of a Saviour, nor the covenant made with him as Mediator, nor his instructions to his apostles, nor their manner of executing their commission, nor their language concerning the Gentiles, give the smallest countenance to such a sentiment: but they always spake and acted, as if conversion to God by Jesus Christ was absolutely necessary, in order that any of the human race should be saved. And as "it is appointed to all men once "to die, but after death the judgment," at which solemn season all that do not go into eternal life, must go away into everlasting punishment; and "they who sin without law will perish without law;" we can allow nothing further than that it will be far

more tolerable in the day of judgment for ignorant heathens, than for ungodly professors of Christianity. The Scripture is decisive on the subject, however its determination may now be opposed, under the pretence of candour and charity.

But it may be objected, that Christians in general are as wicked as the Gentiles, or not much better: and we should answer this objection with tears and heartfelt grief! "Woe be to the world because of "offences! It must needs be that offences come, but "woe be to that man by whom they come." It is however unreasonable to suppose that Christianity will change those, who neither believe its doctrines, attend on its ordinances, nor obey its precepts; even as unreasonable as to expect, that a medicine should cure those who refuse to take it. And it is still more absurd to charge the blame on Christianity, of all those abominations, which Antichrist has perpetrated, in express contradiction to the commands of Christ, but according to what was clearly foretold by his apostles as a vile perversion of his holy religion: even as absurd, as to find fault with an excellent medicine, because a vile murderer had substituted a fatal poison in its stead!

Yet after all, Christianity has done immense good to society, even among those who are not true Christians. Christianity by subverting the system of gross idolatry, has terminated a variety of cruel and inhu

man practices, and detestable debaucheries, which it sanctioned and protected. Far juster notions, not only of God and religion, but also concerning what is laudable or the contrary in the actions of men, have grown almost imperceptibly from the influence of Christianity. It has fixed a vastly higher standard of morals, not only in the books of the learned, but in the general sentiments of mankind. It has driven into secret recesses such crimes, as before stalked abroad without shame. It has mitigated the horrors even of war; and removed savage cruelty, at least, from publick diversions. It has given a consequence to the lower ranks in society, and to the female sex, to which they before were strangers. It has endowed hospitals, and multiplied publick charities; and given men in general a far deeper sense of their obligation to relieve distress, than they had before, or now have in heathen countries; and if it still fail of abolishing the slave-trade, it has entered such a protest against the abominable traffick, as all the annals of paganism cannot equal; and in many other ways it has vastly meliorated the state of the world.

But where its truths are indeed believed, and its precepts obeyed, far more important and beneficial effects have followed. Even in this land, while we must mourn over prevailing abominations, we cannot but be confident that there are tens of thousands, who truly repent of all their sins, and "do works "meet for repentance," who believe in the Lord Jesus

Christ, and are " constrained by love to live no longer " to themselves, but to him who died for them and " rose again;" who, after his example and in obedience to his command, walk in love, by love serve one another, and so love even their enemies, as to persevere in attempting " to overcome evil with " good;" in short, who are " taught by the grace " of God, which bringeth salvation, to deny un- " godliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, " righteously, and godly in this present world; " looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious " appearance of the great God, and of our Saviour " Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, to redeem " us from all iniquity, and to purify us unto himself " a peculiar people, zealous of good works." These are accepted in Christ, and made meet for the inheritance of heaven; and they are bright examples, shining as lights in the world, who, by their influence, endeavours, converse, and prayers, check the progress of vice and impiety, and communicate, as " the salt of " the earth," the savour of truth and holiness around them.

But where do we read, in the account of nations strangers to Christianity, ancient or modern, of characters unequivocally answering to this remnant found in Christian countries? And what would be the consequence, if this genuine Christianity should universally prevail in any nation; and all men should live as this remnant does, who yet are consciously very far from having attained even that measure of

holiness, to which divine grace has raised numbers of their fellow sinners? and what would be the effect of the gospel being thus believed and obeyed all over the earth, but universal piety, humility, justice, temperance, peace, and love? Wars, oppressions, frauds, slavery, licentiousness, and every species of violence and immorality, must cease of course: if the change were effected suddenly, it would still the madness of this turbulent world, as entirely, as the Saviour's powerful words, "Peace be still," silenced the stormy winds, and calmed the tempestuous billows: and whenever or by whatever means it shall take place, a state of felicity on earth, not much unlike that of heaven will be the necessary consequence. For this we are taught by our Lord to pray in *the first place*, "Hallowed be thy name, "thy kingdom come, thy will be done in earth as it "is in heaven:" and surely, if we would not have our prayers condemned as hypocrisy, we should endeavour to promote this kingdom of our God and Saviour, by all the means in our power.

Contrast then, my Christian brethren, the state of the world, as it has been hitherto, especially in heathen countries, with what it would be did our holy religion every where prevail; and while your hearts glow with gratitude for the peculiar blessings you enjoy, and with fervent desires that the same may be communicated to all nations; and while these desires are formed into earnest ejaculatory prayers for the blessed

change; you will be prepared for the sequel of the subject, while we

II. Consider the duties in this respect incumbent on us, and enquire how far we have criminally neglected them;

And here it is necessary to be cautious, that we do not, by an indiscriminate statement, both fail of producing conviction; give occasion to rash and unwarrantable attempts; and furnish opponents with plausible objections, as if we wanted to induce men, by a disproportionate and romantick zeal in one particular, to disregard all other duties in pursuing the favourite object.

When our Lord said to his apostles, "Go ye and "teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of "the Father, and of the Son, and of the holy "Ghost; teaching them to observe all things "whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo, I "am with you always, even unto the end of the "world;" "Go ye into all the world, and preach "the Gospel to every creature;" "that repent-"ance and remission of sins should be preached in "my name to all nations:" he certainly did not mean, that the apostles and primitive evangelists *alone* should be employed in this service; for they could only execute their commission for a very few years, and in comparatively a small part of the

globe. No doubt therefore he intended, that the churches which they established, and the ministers who should afterwards be raised up, from age to age, should not merely stand on the defensive, and indolently keep the ground that had been gained; but should carry on an offensive war against the kingdom of darkness with persevering constancy. And so long as any part of any nation remains unconverted to Christianity, the church militant ought, no doubt, to persist in this holy warfare, without indulging sloth, or fearing man, or regarding any secular interest, compared with the enlargement of the Redeemer's kingdom, "of righteousness, peace, and "joy in the holy Ghost." The work is the Lord's, but he carries it on by means and instruments: and it must therefore be our duty to use such means, and to seek for such instruments, as he employs and blesses; in order that, according to the predictions and promises of Scripture, "Christ may be a Light "of the Gentiles and the Salvation of the Lord to "the ends of the earth."

The progress made in this respect during the first century was so great; that had the same holy ardour animated succeeding Christians, every part of the world would long since have been evangelized. But alas, that disinterested, courageous, and patient zeal, and that deep compassion for perishing sinners, which actuated the apostles and primitive preachers of the gospel gradually declined, till it almost ex-

pired; and then its feeble exertions were made to promote a corrupted gospel by antichristian means. So that it may be doubted, whether, all things considered, the kingdom of the Redeemer, during the course of above 1500 years, has not been contracted rather than extended. All the professed Christians, of every name, do not at this day amount to one sixth of mankind; and what sort of Christians most of them are is alas well known!

Whether therefore we consider the great ends for which the Son of God came into the world; or his commands to his disciples; or the way in which they understood them, and their example of zealous unwearied exertion amidst hardship and persecution, and with martyrdom always before their eyes: or whether we advert to the law of love, as illustrated by his conduct, "who came into the world to save "sinners;" and "for the joy set before him en-"dured the cross and despised the shame:" it is obvious, that something should be attempted, with zeal and perseverance, to enlarge the Redeemer's kingdom by evangelizing the heathen.

But even in the primitive times, it was not the duty of every Christian to become a minister; nor that of pastors in general to leave their stated charges to preach the gospel in distant lands; and therefore they were not criminal in declining these services. Slaves, poor persons, and others, would have very little acquaintance

with the state of distant countries; very little ability to amend what they saw amiss nearer home; and no direct influence beyond their own contracted circle.

Some individuals however were so evidently called forth, qualified, and marked by their brethren, and the pastors of the church, for these services, that if they declined or forsook them, they were highly criminal: such at first was Mark, when he went not with Paul and Barnabas to the work, evidently because he shunned danger and hardship, and Demas who forsook the apostle, "having loved this present "world." It was also incumbent on the stated pastors of the church to excite in the minds of Christians a zeal for the conversion of the nations; and by their example, prayers, and ministrations, to stir up a desire in proper persons to engage in the arduous but honourable service. They who were not employed in the ministry, or endowed with the needful qualifications, were doubtless bound to contribute, according to their ability, to the support of such as "went forth in the name of Christ, "taking nothing of the Gentiles;" in order that they might be "fellow-helpers to the truth." Others would be required cheerfully to part with their dear relatives, that they might not prevent their engaging in the perilous work; nay, loving Christ more than any relation, it would be their duty to encourage them, if competent judges deemed them called to undertake it. In a variety of ways the common cause might be promoted, by the exam-

ples, influence, and conversation of Christians in general; as every thing, that tends to communicate and perpetuate a spirit of genuine zeal and love within the church, must also tend to remove obstructions to its enlargement. And especially all might unite in constant prayers to "the Lord of "the harvest, to send forth labourers into his har-"vest," and to protect, comfort, guide, and bless all those who were engaged in preaching the Gospel to the nations: while the degree of every man's obligation, and his criminality in not fulfilling it, bore a proportion to the talents entrusted to his stewardship.

The case is still the same. It behoves every one of us to enquire what we can do in this respect, *consistently with other duties?* What advantages we possess, for promoting so good a cause? What we might attempt, did not selfishness, love of the world, and fear of hardship and suffering, induce a reluctancy; or unbelief lead us to conclude, that no good can be done? How we may, by patronage, liberality, or labour, second such well concerted plans as others have formed, but have not the means of executing? Or how concur in forming plans, which others, who have more influence, may adopt and carry into execution? Or how we may suggest hints to those who are employed, which may conduce to their success?

The talents and circumstances of men are immensely various: and we should not merely aim

to induce the concurrence of multitudes; but that each individual should be employed, according to his peculiar qualifications, or the situation in which he is placed. In times of war, it would not conduce to success, for all to become soldiers: for statesmen, and senators, and very many descriptions of men in subordinate stations, are as necessary as even the soldiers themselves.

Thus faithful pastors in their several congregations; prudent and active men who form and conduct plans for evangelizing the heathen; men in business, who devote a portion of their honest gain to support the expences; they who study the languages of the nations, and use other means of preparing missionaries for their work, or facilitating their progress; and they that, having influence or reputation, patronize and protect their designs against the opposition of worldly men; are all serving the common cause: nor would it be advisable to remove them from their several stations, even to employ them as missionaries. In various ways, especially by adorning the gospel, and promoting the purity and peace of the church, and by constant prayers, vast multitudes may concur, who have neither that vigour of constitution, nor that ardour and strength of mind, nor those rare and peculiar endowments, which are requisite to constitute such a missionary, as may hope for permanent success.

But should any one be led to think that he ought

to engage in this service; or should the eyes of his pastor, or pious friends, be turned on him, as a suitable person; it would be his duty, earnestly to pray that God would enable him to divest himself of all the prejudice, arising from worldly hopes and fears; to examine impartially his own motives and spirit; to consult competent judges; to deliberate on their advice, as in the sight of God; to view the subject steadily and on every side; and thus to determine how he ought to act, and then to follow his conviction, leaving all consequences in the hands of the Lord.

In short, if a man attempt what, all things considered, he deems incumbent on him; and endeavour by proper means to learn more fully "what the will of "the Lord is;" he is not in this respect, chargeable with guilt: but if his conscience testify, that sloth, self indulgence, and a disregard to the glory of God, and the salvation of his fellow creatures, compared with worldly objects, induce him to neglect what he might do, and what he ought to do; he is doubtless criminal: and it may seriously be apprehended, that all Christians, during many ages, have been chargeable with great neglect in this particular: and especially forms no inconsiderable part of our ional guilt; in that, professing the Christian reli-, we have carried our merchandise, and our into all the regions of the earth; and have entirely failed of improving our peculiar ades, for communicating to the Gentiles the

blessings of our holy religion. A remnant, I trust, has sighed and mourned on this account, as well as over the other prevailing iniquities of our land: yet a selfish torpor, a Laodicean lukewarmness, seems to have seized upon the hearts of most of us; from which, I pray God, we may at length be finally and effectually delivered; so that "our love and "zeal may abound more and more in knowledge and "in all judgment!"

III. I proceed to suggest some hints concerning the performance of our *duties* in respect of the conversion of the heathen.

But indeed, if the Gentiles are living "without "Christ, without hope, and without God in the "world:" it might be supposed that they, who by providence and grace have been made to differ, whom God hath "reconciled to himself by Jesus Christ," and who now rejoice in the hope of eternal glory, would be all alive to the feelings of compassion towards their poor fellow-sinners, as well as filled with grateful zeal for the honour of their beloved Lord and Saviour; and that having experienced the blessings of his gospel themselves, they would be eager to communicate them to those who are perishing in pagan darkness. Thus the primitive Christians and ministers evidently felt and acted; hence all their zealous labours, and constant self-denial, and patient sufferings. They did not coldly say, What is my bounden duty? But, What can I do? "Here I am,

"Lord, send me." The apostles and evangelists were ready to go any whither, and to venture and suffer any thing, provided they might have the invaluable favour granted them, of "preaching "among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of "Christ." They were often so zealous in the cause, that it was needful for their brethren to moderate their ardour; and numbers, with St. Paul, might have said, "None of these things move me, neither "count I my life dear unto myself, so that I may "finish my course with joy, and the ministry which "I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the "gospel of the grace of God." And indeed the Christians in general, who were not called to this special service, seem to have been animated by the same holy fervency, in aiding the exertions of their brethren to the utmost of their ability.

When we think of nearly a thousand millions of our species at once inhabiting this globe; all sinners, all having immortal souls, all to stand before God in judgment, all soon to die, yet to live *for ever* in another world, either in happiness or misery; and few, (alas, how very few in comparison,) having any ground to hope for happiness in that eternal state! When we reflect that another thousand millions will in a few years have succeeded the present generation; all born in sin and the children of wrath and disobedience, to be soon swept away into eternity; and that this is the case from age to age! And when we remember that

"God has so loved the world as to give his only "begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him "should not perish but have everlasting life;" that in infinite mercy he has sent us the gospel, and led us to embrace it; that we possess a good hope through grace; and that the same gospel is suitable, free, and sufficient, for all throughout the world, if all heard and believed it: surely the mind that was in Christ, love to him and his cause, a desire to imitate his example, and genuine philanthropy, will combine to excite us, to use all our influence in every way, which may tend, either directly or more remotely, to promote the great ends of Emmanuel's incarnation, and death upon the cross! Our life is short—a large proportion of it is already spent; we have lived too much and too long unto ourselves; and "there is no work, nor device, nor "knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither we "are going." Let us then not merely enquire what we are *bound* to do? but what we can do? And how any of our labours, efforts, or contributions, according to our several talents, may produce some effect in spreading our holy religion; and how we, feeble and insignificant individuals, by combining our influence, and exciting others to join us, may extend its blessings to the remotest nations, and to those who shall exist in future ages. Surely this is the grand end for which we ought to value life, after we "have "known the grace of God in truth;" and all that respects our temporal interests, should be entirely

subordinated to the desire of glorifying God, and doing good to mankind, above all in their eternal concerns!

If we would conduct undertakings of this kind in that manner which may eventually be most useful; we should endeavour to acquire enlarged views of the subject. A soul in China, or Africa, is of as much value, as one in our own families or congregations; and its salvation as important: and in like manner a soul that shall exist in the next century, or ages after we are dead, will be of as much value, as the soul of any man now living. We should therefore make up our minds, to lay ourselves out with persevering diligence, amidst delays and discouragements, as well as in the face of dangers and difficulties. We may never see or hear of the fruit of our exertions; but it may perhaps hereafter be said concerning them, to those who shall succeed us, "Other men laboured, and ye "are entered into their labours." The sacred writers were as really instruments in our salvation, seventeen hundred years at least after their death; as "the "ministers by whom we believed;" and so were they, who first brought the inestimable treasure of the holy Scriptures into our island; and they too who translated them into our language.

The persons, who form good roads through regions before impassable, as much assist future travellers, as they who supply them with convenient vehicles. And endeavours to acquire an acquaintance with the lan-

guages of the heathen nations; to translate the whole or any part of the Scriptures into those languages; to circulate them in the proper places; to teach the natives to read them; and in any way to furnish means of faith and grace where there are *none*, are preparing the road for Missionaries; and may eventually as much subserve the common cause, as actually supporting Missions: though not in a manner so congenial to our feelings, or so likely to gratify us with the tidings of success.

The man, who has enlarged views of agricultural improvement, not only makes inclosures, plants vineyards, or sows corn, in order to obtain a speedy increase: but he plants acorns, and raises timber-trees, for the use of future generations; being satisfied with the reflection, that others will in due time be profited by his labours. In this part of his plan, which requires most patience and disinterestedness, he may be censured by the inconsiderate, as if he effected nothing: but in the event he will be proved, to have wisely consulted the permanent good of his family and of the publick. Let it not then be thought that nothing is done, while the ground is preparing, or seed is provided, or it is cast into the earth, but does not yet appear. Feeble beginnings may at length produce great effects: the most successful efforts, in almost every thing, have been slighted at first, and they who planned or set them on foot have seldom lived to witness their success. Let none then "de-

" spise the day of small things:" let none undervalue any of the different methods by which the same grand object may be pursued; for we may say to Christians at large in this respect, " These things " ought ye to have done, and not to have left the " other undone."

In attempting to convert the heathen, we should also be careful not to forget for a moment our own principles, concerning the character of fallen man, and the usurped dominion of satan; which alone render their conversion indispensably necessary. The human heart, both among the civilized and the savage nations, is " carnal and enmity to God." Men may be friendly when you trade with them, and carry them such things as they highly value: but if an attempt be made, in good earnest, to turn them from their idolatry, superstition, and wickedness, to the spiritual worship and service of God our Saviour; if their rivetted prejudices and criminal practices be fairly, though meekly, opposed; if their fears be excited, and guilt charged home on their consciences; if repentance and works meet for repentance be insisted on; if the strict precepts and awful sanction of the divine law, and the offensive doctrines of the gospel be explained to them; if in short, Christianity be thoroughly preached, as the apostles preached it, many of them will be exasperated. However they may endure gradual introductory instructions, of which they do not clearly perceive the

tendency: when they fully understand what is meant, they will consider the preacher, as aiming "to turn the world upside down," as exceedingly troubling the city or country, and as teaching customs which they must not observe.

Satan also, who "works in the children of disobe-" dience," will use all his influence, both as a deceiving serpent and as a roaring lion, to support his tottering kingdom, which is directly attacked by every effort to evangelize the heathen: nor can any prudence, meekness, or love, which consists with faithfulness, prevent the effects of this combined opposition. Dangers and difficulties likewise of various kinds are inseparable from the attempt: nor have modern missionaries the advantages enjoyed by the apostles and primitive preachers of the Gospel. The invention of printing, indeed, has put a very powerful engine into our hands, of disseminating divine truth, which they had not; and of which it becomes us to make as much use, if possible, as wicked men do in propagating impiety and iniquity. But our Missionaries must, by long previous study, obtain the imperfect knowledge of the languages spoken by the heathen; whilst the apostles were at once endued with this needful qualification from on high. *They* called men's attention to them and their message, by multiplied and surprising miracles of love; but *our's* must gradually gain confidence "by patient continuance in well doing." In short,

obstructions, insurmountable by human power, on every side impede our progress: and it is proper we should be aware of it, and fairly warn all concerned to count the cost. But let us not be discouraged. If we use no carnal weapons, but such only as the Lord himself appoints; he will at length render them effectual. "Who art thou, O great mountain, "before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain."— "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit "saith the LORD of Hosts."

In the depth of a severe winter, the impediments to cultivation from snow and frost, are insuperable by all the power of man: but when the almighty Ruler of the seasons sends the warm south wind, with the beams of the vernal sun, the ice and snow dissolve, the earth softens, vegetation proceeds rapidly, and the husbandman finds the obstructions effectually removed. And thus it is and thus it will be, whenever, or wherever "the Spirit of God is "poured from on high." We ought not then to be discouraged by difficulties, or shrink from steadily contemplating them: but we should look well to our motives and to our means; and above all be careful to place our whole confidence in the Lord, knowing that the gospel, when faithfully preached, has always been made "the power of God "unto salvation;" and if we have true faith, we may say to the mountain, "Be thou removed, and "be thou cast into the sea," and nothing will be

impossible to us. As, however, some regions oppose stronger barriers to our progress, than others do; and as we cannot make our efforts in every part of that immense field which lies before us: we may very properly enquire, where the state of civilization and learning, or the nature of the existing governments, with various other circumstances, give the most reasonable prospect of success; and where a central situation affords the fairest hope that the gospel, if successful, would thence be more widely diffused. While therefore we seek heavenly wisdom, by searching the word of God, and constant prayer to him for it: we should endeavour to avail ourselves of all those sources of information, by which we may learn the actual situation of different countries in every part of the globe.

And here it may be observed, that it is of vast importance, that the several Societies, formed for this great purpose, should consider one another, as coadjutors and not as competitors, and cultivate an amicable intercourse. In this case many societies will probably be found preferable to one, though proportionably larger. One may embrace this special object, and another that; one may find the readiest access to this country, and the other to that country: external circumstances may give one an advantage for a particular kind of service, from which the other may be precluded: each may, as it were, bring into circulation the treasure of wisdom and piety, as well as

influence, which is found in its particular circle: and they may all profit by the counsels, plans, observation, success, or failures, of every one; and help one another in various ways, when that assistance becomes especially seasonable. Thus more methods may be tried, more talents brought into exercise, more information and wisdom acquired, and more exertion made by several Societies, amicably striving together for the faith of the gospel, than by one. Thus a number of merchants, acting separately, yet in a manner friendly to each other, extend commerce much more advantageously, than a large monopoly. And diverse kinds of soldiers form a better army; than if all were exactly of the same description, armed in the same manner, and formed but one vast phalanx: provided they have no other contest, but a zealous competition who shall best serve the common cause.

The world, my brethren, is wide enough, and there is little danger of our interfering with each other, except we intend it. If then, we endeavour to animate one another to exertion; to encourage one another's zeal and patience when they decline; to impart reciprocally information, and give mutual assistance; we may even take occasion from those things, which prevent our making one united effort, to aim at the same object with at least equal advantage.

But let it be observed, that when the Lord intends

eventually to prosper any design, he seldom answers the first sanguine hopes of its zealous friends. By previous delays and disappointments, he commonly purifies our motives, renders our dependence on his power and grace more simple, and excites us to more fervent and earnest prayer and supplication. He thus leads us to compare our measures and means with the sacred Scriptures, and to rectify what has not accorded to them. He gives us deeper views of our own unworthiness and insufficiency; and brings us to despair of success, except from his powerful interposition. Having thus formed us to a more proper disposition of mind, and the use of hallowed means exclusively, he begins to prosper the design, and to work for the glory of his own name. So that discouraging ill success, in the outset of a good design, often gives occasion to that self-examination and study, and that melioration of our motives and means, which make way for the most important subsequent success. We should therefore neither despond as we are very apt to do, or faint, when we are thus rebuked and disappointed; nor should we object to evidently good designs, because of failures and discouragements: but we should try to profit by experience, and prosecute the object with greater simplicity and humility, and with persevering patience and unceasing prayer.

It has frequently been objected to vigorous measures for Missions among the heathen, that we have

multitudes of very wicked people at home, whose reformation we should attempt in preference: yet it may fairly be questioned, whether they who start the objection, are the most zealous, in using every proper means of bringing sinners to repentance and faith in Christ, in their own neighbourhood? nay, whether many of them do not, on various pretences, oppose the well meant endeavours of others for that purpose? It will perhaps be found, that the most active friends to Missions, are also the most diligent in promoting Christianity at home. But it may also be observed, that none in this land are entirely destitute of all means of becoming wise unto salvation, as hundreds of millions in other countries are known to be. Let us then do all we can for a revival of pure Christianity at home, and aim also to send the gospel to the dark regions of the earth.

But some are afraid, that by sending Missionaries abroad, we shall in part deprive our own country of Christian instruction. Alas, there is little reason to apprehend, that any considerable number of such men, as would be likely to do effectual service at home, will engage in the work of Missions: a far more zealous and courageous spirit must prevail among Christians than we have hitherto witnessed, before there be any danger on that side. But if indeed this was the case, so far from diminishing our measure of scriptural instruction, it would exceedingly increase it: for nothing can be imagined so

likely to stir up all Ministers to zeal and activity; to turn the thoughts and inclinations of pious Christians to the work of the ministry; to enlarge the acquaintance of multitudes with the holy Scriptures; and to excite a very general attention to the Gospel. I cannot doubt, but that well conducted and successful plans for evangelizing the heathen, would prove most powerful means of more fully evangelizing Britain: and on this ground, as well as on all others, the thought and desire have for years been prominent in my mind; though I long despaired of being in any measure instrumental in so blessed a service. Indeed it is no small advantage, no inconsiderable success, arising from the zeal which has lately been shewn for missions; that it has excited a great attention to the revival of Christianity in this land: and though every thing that man does may be found defective; yet I would indulge a hope, that both in that respect, and in the more immediate object in view, these efforts shall at length be crowned with indisputable and permanent success.

It is well known, that in times of war, the military spirit, which before lay dormant, almost always rekindles and becomes general. It spreads from breast to breast; and acquires new vigour continually: insomuch, that no losses, which do not materially affect population, can properly be said to lessen the number of soldiers; for others press forward to fill up their places, the ardour increases, and at

length there is some danger lest all other employments should be deserted for a military life. These indeed are scenes deeply to be regretted, though often hitherto found unavoidable: but they may serve to illustrate our subject, and shew the tendency of our exertions.

For I apprehend, that in our spiritual warfare, likewise, the timid defensive state, in which Christians have long been contented to stand, in respect of the Gentile world, has tended greatly to extinguish the spirit of zeal for the conversion of sinners at home; at least it has greatly languished and lain dormant: but if once the servants of God should become, generally and thoroughly, engaged in scriptural efforts for the conversion of the heathen, and should declare offensive war against the kingdom of the devil; depend upon it, zeal for pure Christianity in our own country, and in our own hearts, will revive in proportion. This will kindle from breast to breast; the number of true Christians and faithful ministers will be multiplied; our petty differences will be mutually born with, if they do not disappear; we shall "love one "another with a pure heart fervently;" we shall pray for one another and thank God for each other; we shall be like valiant fellow soldiers in the same army, cordially and affectionately engaged in the same common cause, and against the same common enemy.

As therefore the revival of pure christianity would exceedingly promote the cause of Missions; so wise

and holy zeal for Missions would reciprocally promote the revival of pure christianity.

Having now gone through my subject, perhaps rather too largely; (but my heart is earnestly engaged by the great object, which must plead my excuse:) it may be expected that I should give some account of this newly instituted Society: but here I shall be very brief and general.

We would consider ourselves as fellow-helpers with all, who attempt to propagate vital Christianity among the heathen: but we found impediments in our way, which prevented us from employing all our influence, or extending our labours so far as we desired, by concurring with any of the Societies already formed: and on this ground it was deemed more conducive to the general end, to form a separate Society, in which we hope more effectually to exert ourselves in promoting the common cause. A concurrence of circumstances, arising from external causes, from our views of the subject, and from the special line of service in which we suppose ourselves most likely to succeed, have rendered our progress hitherto but slow: but we may confidently say, that we have not been inactive, though our proceedings have neither much attracted publick notice, nor been of a very expensive nature.

By the report of the Committee, it will appear that attempts have been made to open a correspondence with pious clergymen all over the united

kingdoms; and to obtain the assistance of their counsel and prayers; and especially by their means to bring forth proper persons for Missionaries, and to stir up a *missionary spirit* through the land. No doubt men may easily be found, whose ardent spirits, and predilection for uncommon adventures, dispose them for any undertaking however perilous, without having taken time, or bestowed pains, to understand the nature of it, or to count the cost: and when persons of this description receive religious impressions, they are ready enough, in some circumstances to become Missionaries. But this state of mind differs widely from the considerate, humble, modest, self-denied zeal and love, of one rendered willing, by divine grace, to renounce all earthly comforts and prospects, and to labour amidst hardships and perils, with undaunted courage, unwearied patience, and steady perseverance, among pagans, in some remote and obscure part of the world.

This is the genuine missionary spirit, which, in ordinary circumstances, must be called forth, by the use of proper means, and the blessing of God upon them; and when we consider the immense field to be cultivated, it must appear that every thing, which tends to excite this spirit where Christianity is now known, forms a most important part of the general plan for evangelizing the heathen in future ages, in concurrence with our endeavours to attempt whatever we can, for the benefit of the present generation. And though the Society has not hitherto engaged any

Missionaries; they are not without hopes of being able shortly to do it: and they cannot doubt but at length God will hear their most earnest prayers, and send forth "labourers into his harvest."

It will appear, also that various attempts are either actually making or in contemplation, for translating the Scriptures, or parts of them, or short compendiums of Christianity, into the languages of the heathen, in order to circulate them in several countries; as preparatory to Missions; and in other ways to render the press subservient to the grand design.

It is also purposed to educate native Africans, and to instruct them carefully in our holy religion; in order at length to employ them as Schoolmasters, among their countrymen. The avidity, with which the Africans embrace opportunities of learning the elements of science is fully ascertained; and it is hoped, that gratuitous instruction of this kind will open a way for the gospel among them; and that African Schoolmasters may concur with British Missionaries, and become perhaps Missionaries themselves in process of time; and such Missionaries, as will not so much as be incommoded by a climate, which is exceedingly trying to European constitutions.

This is not the whole of the designs already formed by the Committee; which as matured in any good measure will be made known; when it is hoped,

that objections started against some particulars in their plan, will be satisfactorily obviated.—They have well weighed the extreme difficulty of the undertaking; and have endeavoured to get their minds armed against dismay and discouragement: but they would use all prudent means for preventing any waste of the sums, advanced by the publick liberality; and still more, any needless risk of the health or lives of those zealous men, who engage in Missions; and who are apt to disregard their own lives, in proportion as they long after the salvation of souls: as prudent and able generals are always careful not to expose their most valiant soldiers to needless danger.

But so far from giving up the design, as some have supposed, they are more and more deeply impressed with the sense of its vast importance, and more fully determined, by the help of God, to persevere in it to the uttermost. I shall only add, my brethren, that whether you can, or cannot, afford us any pecuniary assistance; we earnestly intreat you, to aid us with your daily prayers and supplications, to that God, who alone can give wisdom, inspire zeal and love, and keep us cordially united in humility and simplicity; who alone can raise us up helpers and instruments, open doors, remove mountains, and give success: as it is our decided opinion, that they who most pray for us, are the best benefactors to the institution, and take the most effectual means of rendering it successful.

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REPORT

OF

THE COMMITTEE,

DELIVERED TO

THE ANNUAL MEETING

HELD MAY 26, 1801,

AT THE NEW LONDON TAVERN, CHEAPSIDE.

REPORT,

&c.

IT is not without a considerable degree of diffidence that the Committee make a report of their proceedings: for though they cannot charge themselves with deficiency either in zeal or diligence, they fear that the effect of their exertions will scarcely come up to the sanguine expectations of many; by whom the difficulties attendant upon every new and important undertaking have not been duly weighed, nor the care and caution requisite in laying a firm and solid foundation fully considered. At present indeed they pretend to nothing more than to have endeavoured to lay such a foundation, and respectfully submit to the judgment of the publick the means they have used to accomplish it.

Information and knowledge, in the Members of the Committee, being absolutely essential to the wise discharge of the trust reposed in them, their first step has been to procure those publications, which relate to the history of Missions; which point out the difficulties encountered, or display the suc-

cess obtained, in the various attempts made to propagate the Christian faith; or which describe the nature of the countries in which missions may be established, and the religion, prejudices, and customs of their inhabitants. By the increase of books of this kind, a valuable missionary library will be formed. With the chart of knowledge and experience thus open before them, the Committee hope to escape the rocks and shoals, upon which missions have often made shipwreck.

Their next object has been to engage the attention, prayers, and co-operation of a number of fellow-labourers in their important work. For this purpose they have opened a correspondence with a very considerable number of pious clergymen in almost every part of this kingdom. From these they hope to receive advice and assistance; and by these they trust that proper persons will be recommended as Missionaries, men who have lived under the eye of their pastors in Christian sobriety and vigilance, and approved themselves as faithful disciples of Jesus Christ.

The thoughts of the Committee have next been anxiously turned to the most probable method of successfully propagating the Gospel in heathen countries, especially those which are in a rude and uncivilized state. And here they have consulted such Missionaries as, having themselves laboured in this

work, have been acquainted by experience with the nature of the difficulties to be encountered. From them they have learned the extreme difficulty of communicating the truths of the gospel, where no foundation of knowledge has been laid; where no previous truths are acknowledged from which others may be proved; where conscience has scarcely been enlightened to discern between good and evil; and where perhaps the language possesses no terms, adapted to express the principal ideas of the Christian faith. They have deeply felt for the painful situation of a faithful Missionary, endeavouring by the dubious help of an interpreter, or in the uncertain accents of a language ill understood and imperfectly spoken, to convey truths of the most sublime and spiritual nature. With no such difficulty as this had the apostles to contend. The holy Spirit supplied them with a full and accurate knowledge of the language of the nation to which they preached. They lived also at a period in which the influence of civilization was generally extended and powerfully felt. The whole world, in consequence of the dominion of the Roman empire, formed but one family, between the several parts of which a ready intercourse prevailed, and throughout which letters were universally cultivated. Sensible, therefore, of the extreme difficulty under which a Missionary now labours amongst uncivilized nations, the Committee have conceived it to be their duty to facilitate, as much as possible, his attainment of the lan-

guage of the countries to which he may be sent; and for this purpose to print in it grammars, vocabularies, and other such useful works.

But they intend also still further to call in the aid of the press, and to use it as a most powerful auxiliary in their grand design. For the benefit of nations, whose language has not yet been reduced to writing, they propose, as a measure introductory to the diffusion of Christianity, to print spelling-books and other elementary works, by means of which the progress of knowledge in their own language may be promoted. For the use also of such nations, and of others likewise in which letters are already known, it is their intention to print, in their respective languages, parts of the holy Scriptures, and tracts conveying, in a popular way, the rudiments of Christian knowledge. The press has been the grand instrument of civilization in Europe; and if Africa and Asia should ever attain the same degree of light and improvement, it will probably be in a great measure through the same means.

Many and great, the Committee conceive, may be the good effects which will follow the adoption of this plan. One of the principal difficulties will thus be removed from the path of Missionaries, and their way rendered smooth. Nations ignorant of letters are in general sensible of their deficiency in this respect, and may be expected to welcome, as

their benefactors, the men who come for information in their own language. Instruction in various useful branches of European arts and learning may be communicated, which will tend to promote civilization, and render the intercourse of such nations with Britain a real blessing to them. This instruction will serve as a lure to attach them to knowledge of a higher kind; and, with the rudiments of learning, the rudiments of Christian doctrines may be taught.

Books can teach, where Missionaries are not admitted; they can penetrate the remotest recesses, and are always at hand, ready to instil wisdom in the calm hour of solitude and reflection. Books may supply, in a measure, the place of Missionaries; and where nothing more is practicable, may often answer the grand purpose, and thus spare the expences of equipment, the fatigue of long journeys, the perils of an inhospitable country, the hardships of a precarious subsistence, and the risk of an unhealthy climate.

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'that neither Mussulmans nor Hindus will ever be 'converted by any Mission from the church of 'Rome, or from any other church[1]; and the only 'human mode perhaps of causing so great a revo- 'lution will be to translate into Sanscrit and Persian 'such chapters of the prophets, particularly Isaiah, 'as are indisputably evangelical, together with one 'of the gospels, and a plain prefatory discourse, 'containing full evidence of the very distant ages 'in which the predictions themselves, and the his- 'tory of the divine Person predicted, were seve- 'rally made public; and then quietly to disperse 'the work among the well educated natives.'

In consequence of this view of the importance of employing the press in subserviency to their grand design, the Committee have engaged the Rev. Mr. Brunton, a Missionary lately employed at Sierra Leone, by the Society in Scotland for propagating the gospel, to compose and print in the *Susoo* language, a language not yet written, but spoken in a considerable part of the western coast of Africa, a Grammar and Vocabulary for the use of Missionaries, and for the use of the natives; a Summary of

[1] However useful the press may be as subservient to the labours of Missionaries, or paving the way for them, it ought not to be set in opposition to them as the only successful mode of converting infidel nations: since it is plain that all the nations, which have been hitherto converted to the faith, have been converted by Missionaries and not by the press.

the history and doctrines of the holy Scriptures, together with various familiar dialogues, in which the principal doctrines of Christianity and other important articles of knowledge are familiarly inculcated and explained. These works are in considerable forwardness. It is proposed also to select some Susoo boys, and to instruct them, either at Sierra Leone or in England, to read and write their own language. These it is intended afterwards to employ as Schoolmasters in the instruction of their own countrymen, and, if qualified for it, as the Catechists of the Society. It is hoped that in time such a plan might support itself without the further aid of the Society, and that a Schoolmaster may at length become a necessary member of a Susoo town[r]. It is obvious how much the progress of civilization may be furthered, and the extension of Christianity be promoted by such a step.

The *Arabic* language is known through a great part of the habitable world. At present it has been used chiefly to propagate the doctrines of the Arabian Impostor; and the success which has attended its use in this respect ought at length to open the eyes of Christians, and shew them the necessity of turning

[r] The general eagerness of the Africans for improvement in learning has been sufficiently noticed by Mr. Parke. Schools for teaching the Arabic language are frequent in many parts of the interior of Africa.

the weapons of the Impostor[1] against himself. The Rev. Mr. Carlyle, Professor of Arabic in the university of Cambridge, in an interesting Memoir, (which is given in the Appendix to this Report, on account of the important views it opens of this subject,) has shewn the utility of printing the holy Scriptures in that language, and has himself proposed to superintend the printing by subscription of a large impression of them. The Committee conceiving this useful work fully to coincide with their own designs, have subscribed for four hundred copies; and in aid of the funds of the Society in this particular, a benefaction of 100*l.* has been given by a generous individual.

The extensive empire of China, which is stated to contain three hundred millions of inhabitants, has hitherto enjoyed no share of the missionary labours of the protestant churches. A zealous dissenting minister, the Rev. Mr. Moseley, has, however, of himself conceived the design of printing part of the Scrip-

[1] A Mandingo, being asked by a Missionary at Sierra Leone by what means his countrymen were induced to embrace the Mahometan faith, replied that the Koran was brought to them from the Forlaks, and that if the New Testament in Arabic had been shewn them first, they would with more readiness have embraced the Christian religion. Though it is true that Mahomet at first propagated his faith by the sword, yet in Africa, of late, his religion has very much owed its prevalence, to the circumstance of the copies of the Koran being multiplied and dispersed through various parts of that continent.

tures in the Chinese language, and circulating the work in that populous country.—Extracts from the valuable Memoir, he has printed upon this subject, are subjoined to this Report.—To carry his design into execution is, however, a work [illegible] adequate to the united efforts of a society than [illegible] exertions of an individual. He has therefore expressed his wish, that this Society should undertake the important work he had proposed, and has promised to give into its hands a considerable pecuniary aid which had been promised to him. The Committee are fully impressed with a sense of the importance of the proposed work, but they are aware of its difficulties. The want of a sufficient fund, the natural difficulty of the Chinese language, the little acquaintance with it which Europeans posses, form obstacles not easily to be surmounted. The Committee, however, have determined to open a separate fund for this purpose[2]. and should that fund be adequate to the necessary expence; and should they also obtain sufficient evidence of the fidelity and elegance of the MS. Chinese version of part of the New Testament, now in the British Museum; or should the Committee find the means of obtaining a faithful and elegant translation, they will direct their attention to this important subject. At the

[1] See Appendix II.

[2] It is expected that any person, sending money for this special purpose, should signify it by a letter to the Secretary.

same time, they earnetly beg it to be understood that a work of this magnitude and importance cannot hastily be executed; and they deprecate the idea, of holding out sanguine or arrogant expectations of speedy success in it.

It will be thus perceived, that though the Society has but one object before it, yet to attain that object two distinct and separate means may be used, *the employment of the Press*, and *the sending of Missionaries*. These are so far considered as distinct means, that subscriptions and benefactions will be appropriated exclusively to the general PRINTING Fund, if particularly requested by the donor at the time of payment. Still, however, they wish it to be explicitly understood, that it is chiefly in subserviency to their orginal and principal design of sending Missionaries that they employ the press. To that principal design they have not been inattentive; but they are sorry to state that their endeavours to meet with persons endued with an apostolic spirit, and with that rare union of qualities, which is requisite to form a true Missionary, have not hitherto been successful. From the number of ministers, however, who now co-operate with them, they entertain little doubt, through the blessing of the great Head of the church, of having, ere long, proper persons brought to their notice. Indeed at this time, the proposals of one person, highly recommended, are under consideration.

The Committee have thus developed their views and plans, and they trust that they may now confidently call upon their fellow Christians for support. This they have hitherto been cautious of doing, while there was not a reasonable prospect of immediately applying the donations they received, to the purposes for which they were solicited. But they trust, that now the principal impediments are removed; and that their exertions will be progressive and effectual. They feel deeply convinced of the importance of their undertaking, and impressed by the extent of the field which opens to their view. The harvest indeed is great*; the fields are white for the harvest; but the labourers are few. Let all who regard the injunctions of our blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and are interested in the success of his kingdom, offer up their fervent prayers that he would send forth labourers into his vineyard.

* In the Island of Ceylon, now under the British Government, it appears that there are not less than 146 Christian schools; of these 54 are within the district of Columbo, and in that one district there are no less than 90,000 native Christians. The Christian religion having been thus successfully planted by the Portuguese whilst they possessed the Island, and then further cultivated by the Dutch, it is hoped that it will not be suffered to decline now that the Island is subject to the crown of England. This important subject has not escaped the attention of the Committee.

APPENDIX I.

(See page 84.)

Copy of the Proposals for printing a new edition of the Holy Scriptures in Arabic. By J. D. Carlyle, B. D. Chancellor of the Diocese of Carlisle, and Professor of Arabic in the University of Cambridge.

It having been suggested that an Arabic Edition of the Scriptures might tend very considerably, at the present moment, towards the advancement of Christianity both in Asia and Africa, the author of the present Proposals has endeavoured to throw together such information as he has been able to collect upon the subject, in order to ascertain how far the undertaking might be likely to be productive of real utility.

Wherever Mahomedanism has gained a footing, the Arabic language, we know, is in some measure understood; but it is only from the recent discoveries of the Sierra Leone Company, and still more from those of Messrs. Park and Brown, that we are become acquainted with the *degree* to which this language prevails in the interior parts of Africa.

The former of these gentlemen penetrated from the West, eastwards to about 1° west longitude; but he had intercourse with many traders who came from a distance of six weeks journey, still farther from the East. The latter of these gentlemen, proceeding in a contrary direction, having entered Africa on the side of Egypt, advanced to about the 27th degree of East longitude, but saw several persons who came from a distance of fifty or sixty days journey from the West. They both travelled nearly upon the same parallel of latitude; that is to say, within the 12° and 15° North. A very small intermediate district therefore only remains, concerning which we have not satisfactory information either from the personal knowledge of these gentlemen themselves, or from credible accounts received by them on the spot from other travellers. Through all this vast district it seems clear that the Arabic tongue is well known. On the eastern side of the Continent, Mr. Brown does not conceive, that the knowledge of this language extends farther to the South than

about 12° North latitude; from thence to the Mediterranean it is almost universally spoken, written, and understood. He farther informs us (and there can be no doubt but that he is perfectly qualified to form a competent judgment upon the subject, from the length of his residence at Cairo, and from his accurate acquaintance with the Arabic) that in the negro kingdoms which he visited, the language in use was the genuine language of the Koran—a much purer dialect than what is spoken upon the Mediterranean coast, or even at Cairo itself.

Mr. Park thinks that, in the western part of the Continent, the knowledge of the Arabic reaches to the 11th or even 10th degree of North latitude. He agrees with several of the travellers from Sierra Leone in representing the negro inhabitants as having arrived at a very considerable degree of civilization. They can almost all read and write the Arabic language, in which they are regularly instructed, the poorer sort by public masters at village-schools, the richer by private tutors at their parents' houses. The native under whose hospitable roof he resided for several months, entertained a master to teach Arabic to his own children, and permitted sixteen others, the children of his poorer neighbours, to learn at the same time.

According to Mr. Park, the negroes are proud of their literature, and seldom travel without a book slung by their side. Amongst their books he has perceived the Pentateuch, the book of Psalms, and the prophet Isaiah. All of these they prize very highly; and such is the general eagerness to obtain them, that he believes no articles would be more saleable in Africa than copies of the Scriptures in Arabic. He has seen a copy of the Pentateuch alone sold at the price of one prime slave, i. e. about 20 guineas.

Their MSS. however were not elegantly written, and they greatly preferred the printed characters which he showed them in Richardson's Grammar, to any writing of their own. This grammar many of them were extremely solicitous to purchase, and he was offered for it above three pounds sterling: he was at last obliged to leave the book behind him, as too valuable a treasure to be taken out of the country.

Such is the present situation of the most populous part of Africa. The inhabitants have acquired some knowledge of Scripture—they seem desirous of acquiring more—and surely it is a consideration well worthy attention, that the

religious knowledge already imparted has not been owing to Christian but to Mahomedan exertions. The light however which they have kindled we may cherish and increase: the Koran, we see, has led on to the reception of the historical parts of Scripture, with which indeed it is in various places intimately connected. The historical books have introduced some of the most essential of the prophetic—Why then should we despair, that these, when united in the same volume with the Gospel, referring to the same objects as it does, interwoven with every part of its texture, may not be a means of inducing the Africans to consider the foundation of Christianity, and to embrace its doctrines?

From the above account of the state of Arabian literature in Africa, it is evident that many of the negroes carried from that country, (especially from the interior part of it,) to our West India islands, must be capable of understanding the Scriptures in Arabic. Mr. Park says, that the vessel in which he returned contained 127 slaves, most of them from the neighbourhood of the coast, but some from the interior of the country; and that out of this number there were 17 or 18 who could read and write Arabic perfectly; but the masters of the ships, he adds, throw the books belonging to the slaves into the sea, for fear a perusal of them 'should make them sick at heart.' If we suppose the same proportion of negroes, purchased by every slave-merchant, to be thus educated (and in general a much larger proportion of the slaves is supposed to be brought from the interior, where the region of knowledge commences) one seventh part of the slaves in the West Indies are able to read the Arabic Bible, were it put into their hands; and, if we may judge of them from their conduct when in a state of freedom, they would willingly receive it, were it offered for their acceptance.

The same arguments that tend to evince the utility of distributing an Arabic version of the Scriptures amongst the Mahomedans of Africa, may be applied to dispersing it amongst persons of that persuasion in India; nay, some will apply with still greater force, and promise still more beneficial effects; such as the superior degree of cultivation at which the inhabitants of India are arrived, and the very important advantages we possess (by being masters of the country) towards securing an easy circulation of books to every part of the Continent.

Nor is this all: From the late remarkable discoveries of Sir

William Jones, Mr. Wilford, and others, no doubting the entertained but that the Purans, however loaded w[illegible] which contain at the bottom the same accounts of the early [illegible] of the world as the books of Moses. This is a fact which, when once rendered evident to the Hindoos, can hardly fail to prove highly interesting to them. We are well assured that many of the Bramins are learned and intelligent; a wonderful change also has, in one important particular, taken place in their manners of late years. They were for ages noted for guarding with jealous care, all the approaches of foreigners to the arcana of their theological and philosophical doctrines; but they [illegible] communicate to Englishmen those volumes which they [illegible] most sacred. They even are ready to assist the Europeans in acquiring the Sanscreet, the language in which the sacred books are written. From the nature of literary and scientific intercourse, as well as from other favouring causes, there is reason to believe that, progressively, the curiosity of this race of people will be awakened to enquire after our science and literature. An instance is already known of a Hindoo prince[1] having learned the Latin language, for the sake of reading the Principia of Newton. We ought not, then, to think it at all impossible to excite the attention of [illegible] countrymen to our religious doctrines. At least, we are [illegible] warranted in forming a conclusion that it is impossible [illegible] experiment has been fairly tried.—And, on the whole, [illegible] appears probable, that no mode of trying it is so easy as that of furnishing them with copies of the Scriptures in a language not unknown, in its original writings, to the Hindoos, and intimately blended with the Persian, which is familiar to multitudes of them; so that they can never want the means either of having such a work interpreted to them or translated into their own tongues. Surely a provision of this kind, for their growing curiosity, favoured also in its reception by their increasing intercourse with Europeans, cannot be made too soon.

There is a circumstance too, attending the Arabic translation of the Scriptures, which we possess, that will peculiarly recommend it to the learned in India, viz. the purity of its language. The barbarous style, in which some Eastern versions of the New Testament are written, has been known to operate very materially against their reception; but the

[1] This proves an error: it was a Mahomedan of distinction.

sion of the Polyglot is free from this objection. Christ composed, probably, by some of the most learned men of Syria and Egypt, certainly at a time when Arabic literature was at its zenith; and it was used at Alexandria and Cairo both by Jews and Christians—by men perfectly acquainted with all the niceties of the language, as a faithful and elegant representation of their respective books of faith. It has obtained the same character amongst the most learned Orientalists in Europe.—Espenius calls it "versio elegans quidem et antiqua"—Gabriel Sionita designs it "nobilissimum totius Testamenti exemplar"—And it is considered by Pocock in the same light. This admirable scholar collated the Pentateuch (which is the work of Saadias of Fireme) with two MSS. in the Bodleian Library, and has given the various readings in the sixth volume of the Polyglot. It is uncertain by whom the historical books were rendered into Arabic—undoubtedly it was done by different persons, as some are translated from the original Hebrew, some from the Greek of the Septuagint, and some from the ancient Syriac version. It is probable that these last were the production of Asiatics, and the former of Egyptians. I have myself collated the Polyglot text of Joshua, Judges, and Ruth, with a very old MS. in the University library at Cambridge, and found the versions to be the same. The text, given by Walton of the prophetical books was compared by him with an ancient MS. in the Bodleian, presented by Selden, and corrected by him in many places from his MS.

The version of the New Testament was collated with two other MS. in the Bodleian, by Walton, and compared with the printed editions.

The Author of the present Proposals is willing to undertake the office of editor.—Upon inquiry and consideration, he has reason to believe that the whole Bible might be printed in a quarto, consisting of about 600 pages, or two volumes in octavo, of about 550 pages each, and at a price (if a pretty large number of copies, as 3000, were taken off) not exceeding 12 *s.* or perhaps considerably lower. The Work, it is conceived, can scarcely be completed in less than a year and a half, or two years: but such is the high sense the writer entertains of the benefits likely to result from it, that he will gladly allot to it whatever time and labour it may require. At the same time he wishes it to be explicitly understood, that he has no view whatever to personal emolument, and he

uggests it, as the most satisfactory mode of conducting the siness, that a committee should be appointed, to which should be at liberty to state the accounts, and which u'd finally settle the price necessary to be put upon the ork, in order to reimburse the actual expenditure.

APPENDIX II.

(See page 85.)

To illustrate what has been stated in the Report, concernin[g] plan in contemplation, for printing the Scriptures, or par[t] them, in the language of China, and circulating them in [the] vast empire, the following extracts have been made from a Me[-] moir by the Rev. William Moseley, on that interesting subject.[1]

SURVEYING the heathen world, we behold the nations in different stages of cultivation. Some are in the lowest state of human degradation; others just emerging from barbarity; a few have attained to high civil improvements. Of these, CHINA is the principal. No nation in the heathen world has risen so high in the civil and polite arts. Its territory is greater than Rome could boast in the zenith of her power[2]. In population it far exceeds all Europe; and its government and police yield to none in the world[3].—

The scene that China now exhibits is too painful to behold. Exclusive of the crimes common to other polished nations, the whole empire of China is devoted to an "Unknown God," to idolatry, and to murder.—

There are two ways by which the gospel may be carried to the heathen. The one by sending Missionaries; the other by circulating the Scriptures. The former of these methods has been tried in China for many years; but hitherto the attempt has been almost in vain.—An opinion, though not noticed by some historians, has very generally obtained, that the gospel was introduced into China at a very early period of the Christian æra.—

We have also very satisfactory evidence that it was published there in the seventh century. This event is recorded in the annals of the empire, and confirmed by the monu-

[1] N. B. The original pamphlet, in the second Edition, improved and enlarged, is sold by Chapman, Fleet-street; Williams, Stationer's court; Mathews, Strand; Ogle, Turnstile; Ogle and Aikman, Edinburgh; and Ogle, Glasgow.

[2] Rome at her height occupied 1,616,000 square miles; China occupies now no less than 1,749,000.

[3] Un peuple que nous n'osons pas nommer qu'avec respect, dont on ne cite les loix qu'avec éloge, & les mœurs qu'avec admiration, mérite plus qu'aucun autre l'attention d'observateur, & l'examen des philosophes. Voyage aux Indes orientales et la Chine, par M. Sonnerat, tom 2, p. 1, 2.

ment that was discovered and dug out of the earth, in 1625, near Sigan, the capital of the province of Xensi.—

Whatever attempts were made to establish Christianity in China, in the first or seventh century, it is a lamentable fact, that no vestige of it was left, except the monument, when Xavier arrived.—Before he had accomplished his mission, or even entered the country, the Lord was pleased to remove him by death. None, except Xavier, had judged the plan practicable. But he was no sooner dead, than the spirit which actuated him burned in the bosoms of Ricci of Mazerata, in the marquisate of Ancona; Pasio of Bologna; and Roger, a Neapolitan. After making themselves acquainted with the language, customs, and laws of the country, they entered the empire. Difficulties presented themselves: these they surmounted; and by patient perseverance, in five years, established themselves at Pekin[1]. Roger and Pasio were soon called home. Ricci, who had distinguished himself by his acquaintance with the religion, laws, ceremonies, and language of the country, continuing still to exert himself, had the pleasure, after labouring many years almost in vain, to see Mandarines embrace the faith of the gospel, and vast multitudes of the populace follow their example. The Emperor Vanli received him with respect, and granted him permission to purchase a house in the capital. Fresh Missionaries were introduced by his influence, who, spreading themselves into the different provinces, conveyed the sound of salvation to the most remote parts of the empire. While the church was thus enlarging itself, and could boast of converts from every rank, its peace was disturbed by the Dominicans and Franciscans, who arrived in 1630. These new Missionaries, disapproving of the methods adopted by their predecessors to convert the Chinese, commenced a dispute, which offended every succeeding Emperor, excited several persecutions, and more than once nearly brought that very church to ruin, which otherwise might have become the established church of the country. These disputes, after rending the church above a hundred years, have, at length, happily subsided. The great object of their mission now unites them, and they act in general, as having but one common interest[2].

[1] L'etablissement du P. Ricci à Peking fut le fruit de vingt années de travaux meiez de traverses et de persecutions. Description de la Chine, par Du-Halde tom 3, p. 75.

[2] Embassy by Sir George Staunton, vol. 2, p. 339.

Near 200,000 Christians are scattered in the different provinces of the Empire; and the number is increasing.—Flattering, however, as these successes may appear, it is notorious, that the priests of Portugal, Italy, and France[1], have lost their original influence in China, and that the great object of their mission has failed. Nor is it likely, from the situation of their respective countries, that they will receive the assistance necessary to continue their present exertions; much less to enlarge them.

The failure of this mission, has not arisen from hindrances which the country itself presented, but from evils which the Missionaries either carried with them, or created upon their arrival.

The unjustifiable conformity of the first Missionaries, laid the foundation of its overthrow. The genius of the people, the laws and customs of the country, required an address, which may easily be dispensed with in the most polished courts of Europe: but a criminal conformity was not absolutely necessary, either to their safety, or success. A mistaken idea, however, that this would facilitate the conversion of the empire, induced them to make sacrifices which the spirit of the gospel would not justify. This conformity was opposed by the Dominicans and Franciscans; and the tumult that it raised, has blasted the plant that each designed to mature[2].

The share which the Missionaries, at different times, have taken in the political concerns of the empire, has no less injured their cause than their conformity.—

What conformity and political intrusion began, their own dissensions have completed. Ecclesiastical disputation has in no place exposed religion to greater contempt, than in China.—

These facts demonstrate two things: First,—That the failure of this mission, has been occasioned by the improprieties of those very men, who were engaged in establishing it, and not by insurmountable local difficulties. And secondly,—That in no Heathen nation, are Missionaries likely

[1] L'evangile est préché dans l'immense Empire de Chine par des Missionaires de toutes les nations Catholiques d'Europe. Pekin, la capitale, a quatre eglises où des pretres et religieux, Francois, Italien, Portugais, &c, font publiquement les exercises de leur religion. Nouvelles des Orientales Mission, Pref. 8.

[2] Istoria delle cose Operate nella China da M. Gio. Ambrogio Mezzabarba &c.—Du-Hald's China —Mosheim's Memoir of the Christian Church in China; and Astley's Collection of Voyages, vol. 4. p. 228—234.

to meet with more civilities; or a mission, well-directed, with better success, than in China.—

Allowing, however, that the time is not yet come, to send Missionaries; it will be confessed, that it is always come, to circulate the word of God.—The practicability of translating the Scriptures into the Chinese language, has been very generally disputed. And notwithstanding the body of evidence that was brought forward in the former edition, some still doubt its possibility. Nothing, however, that is capable of demonstration, admits it more fully. Father Ricci, wrote several books in Chinese. Father Verbiest, wrote and printed an abridgment of the fundamental truths of the Christian religion.[1] Expositions of detached parts of the Scriptures; the catechism of Bellarmin;[2] the life of Aquinas; the exercises of Ignatius; and various other works in divinity, astronomy, mathematics, music, and morals, have been published in China, by Europeans, within the last hundred and fifty years.[3] Can any proof of the practicability of this design, more convincing than this, be required? Most assuredly, if the life of Aquinas, and the exercises of Ignatius have been translated, the life and actions of Christ may be translated with equal ease. If, however, the judgment be convinced of the possibility of this undertaking, it may nevertheless be doubted, whether it can be accomplished in Europe. A few observations will demonstrate it may. On the Continent, there are several natives of China, who, having embraced Christianity, and learnt the Latin language, are qualified to accomplish the work.[4] In England, and on the Continent, there are several Europeans who have either learnt the language in China, or, following the example of Bayer and Foulmont, have

1 Letters Edifiantes, vol. xxiv. p. 480—482.—Kircheri China Illustrata, p. 117, &c.

2 A copy of a catechism in the Chinese language, may be seen in the British Museum.

3 Vide Catalogus Librorum a Patribus nostris in Chinensis Ecclesiæ incrementum conscriptorum. Sino—Latinum Divinæ Legis compendium. Et Dei decem Præcepta, &c.—Kircheri China Illustrata, p. 117—127.—Le Comte, p. 384.

4 The Propaganda of Naples has imported, at different times, vast numbers of Chinese converts, to be educated in the Latin language and divinity, preparatory to their becoming priests among their countrymen. Not less than forty were at Naples, when Sir G. Staunton engaged two, to accompany the late embassy as interpreters, on condition of giving a free passage to two more.

Near 200,000 Christians are scattered in the different provinces of the Empire; and the number is increasing.—Flattering, however, as these successes may appear, it is notorious, that the priests of Portugal, Italy, and France[1], have lost their original influence in China, and that the great object of their mission has failed. Nor is it likely, from the situation of their respective countries, that they will receive the assistance necessary to continue their present exertions; much less to enlarge them.

The failure of this mission, has not arisen from hindrances which the country itself presented, but from evils which the Missionaries either carried with them, or created upon their arrival.

The unjustifiable conformity of the first Missionaries, laid the foundation of its overthrow. The genius of the people, the laws and customs of the country, required an address, which may easily be dispensed with in the most polished courts of Europe: but a criminal conformity was not absolutely necessary, either to their safety, or success. A mistaken idea, however, that this would facilitate the conversion of the empire, induced them to make sacrifices which the spirit of the gospel would not justify. This conformity was opposed by the Dominicans and Franciscans; and the tumult that it raised, has blasted the plant that each designed to mature[2].

The share which the Missionaries, at different times, have taken in the political concerns of the empire, has no less injured their cause than their conformity.—

What conformity and political intrusion began, their own dissensions have completed. Ecclesiastical disputation has in no place exposed religion to greater contempt, than in China.—

These facts demonstrate two things: First,—That the failure of this mission, has been occasioned by the improprieties of those very men, who were engaged in establishing it, and not by insurmountable local difficulties. And secondly,—That in no Heathen nation, are Missionaries likely

[1] L'evangile est préché dans l'immense Empire de Chine par des Missionaires de toutes les nations Catholiques d'Europe. Pekin, la capitale, a quatre eglises où des pretres et religieux, Francois, Italien, Portugais, &c, font publiquement les exercises de leur religion. Nouvelles des Orientales Mission, Pref. 8.

[2] Istoria delle cose Operate nella China da M. Gio. Ambrogio Mezzabarba &c.—Du-Hald's China —Mosheim's Memoir of the Christian Church in China; and Astley's Collection of Voyages, vol. 4. p. 228—234.

to meet with more civilities; or a mission, well-directed, with better success, than in China.—

Allowing, however, that the time is not yet come, to send Missionaries; it will be confessed, that it is always come, to circulate the word of God.—The practicability of translating the Scriptures into the Chinese language, has been very generally disputed. And notwithstanding the body of evidence that was brought forward in the former edition, some still doubt its possibility. Nothing, however, that is capable of demonstration, admits it more fully. Father Ricci, wrote several books in Chinese. Father Verbiest, wrote and printed an abridgment of the fundamental truths of the Christian religion.[1] Expositions of detached parts of the Scriptures; the catechism of Bellarmin;[2] the life of Aquinas; the exercises of Ignatius; and various other works in divinity, astronomy, mathematics, music, and morals, have been published in China, by Europeans, within the last hundred and fifty years.[3] Can any proof of the practicability of this design, more convincing than this, be required? Most assuredly, if the life of Aquinas, and the exercises of Ignatius have been translated, the life and actions of Christ may be translated with equal ease. If, however, the judgment be convinced of the possibility of this undertaking, it may nevertheless be doubted, whether it can be accomplished in Europe. A few observations will demonstrate it may. On the Continent, there are several natives of China, who, having embraced Christianity, and learnt the Latin language, are qualified to accomplish the work.[4] In England, and on the Continent, there are several Europeans who have either learnt the language in China, or, following the example of Bayer and Foulmont, have

1 Letters Edifiantes, vol. xxiv. p. 480—482.—Kircheri China Illustrata, p. 117, &c.

2 A copy of a catechism in the Chinese language, may be seen in the British Museum.

3 Vide Catalogus Librorum a Patribus nostris in Chinensis Ecclesiæ incrementum conscriptorum. Sino—Latinum Divinæ Legis compendium. Et Dei decem Præcepta, &c.—Kircheri China Illustrata, p. 117—127.—Le Comte, p. 384.

4 The Propaganda of Naples has imported, at different times, vast numbers of Chinese converts, to be educated in the Latin language and divinity, preparatory to their becoming priests among their countrymen. Not less than forty were at Naples, when Sir G. Staunton engaged two, to accompany the late embassy as interpreters, on condition of giving a free passage to two more.

made great progress in it at home.[1] By the separate or united labours of an appropriate number of these gentlemen, any part, or the whole, of the divine word may be translated. Possible, however, as it may be to complete this work, I am happy to say more,—*the work is already done.* The Gospel of St. Luke, the Acts of the Apostles, and all St. Paul's Epistles, except that to the Hebrews, have been translated for above 60 years. The manuscript translation is now in the British Museum.[2]—

The substance of the New Testament, being comprehended in these detached parts, it is not necessary to translate more for the first attempt. Nothing, therefore, remains for us to do, but to print and circulate a sufficient number of copies. Some difficulties may attend their distribution, but the whole will give way to the methods of circulation I have to propose. It has been suggested, 'That for what we know, the whole edition, if sent to Canton, might be lodged in some warehouse, and there sleep for ever.' Fully aware of the possibility of this, and of other difficulties, the subject has been re-considered, and additional evidence clearly proves, that we may circulate as many copies as we think proper to send. Chinese merchants, officers of the revenue, the army and navy; Chinese sailors, soldiers, and labourers, have free intercourse with Europeans of every description, at Macao, Canton, and at the ports of the different dependent nations of Cochin-China, Tonquin, Ava, and Siam. The nature of things justifies the supposition, that few vessels sail from any port in Europe or America, without one or more of the crew feeling a veneration for the Scriptures, and being disposed to distribute copies among the ignorant, if freely put into their hands. By engaging individuals in the work, who sail in British, American, and other vessels, some thousands of copies may soon be very widely diffused. It is notorious, that the Chinese are fond of reading. They have long heard of Christ, and of the Scriptures, as we have of Foe and the works of Confucius; and it is highly probable, that if a copy of this manuscript translation, elegantly printed and

[1] The author has the pleasure of knowing several gentlemen who have learnt the language in China, and some who have studied it in Europe.

[2] This manuscript, which, I believe, is the only one in Europe, perhaps in the world, was made at Canton, in 1737 and 1738, by the order of Mr. Hodson, who presented it to Sir Hans Sloane, in September 1738, and was, with his other books, given to the Museum. The manuscript is in folio, and by mistake is lettered, *Evangelica Quatuor Since.*

bound, were put into the hands of a Chinese, he would be induced from curiosity to peruse it, and from the same motive would circulate it among his friends. If 10,000 copies of the works of Confucius, translated into English, elegantly printed and bound, were sent over to this country to be given away, would there be no persons found to accept them?[1] If this would be the case here, with respect to this work, is it not fair to suppose, that it would equally be the case in China, with regard to the Scriptures? Past experience confirms this sentiment. The Jesuits have never found any difficulty in circulating the books which they have printed in Chinese; but on the contrary, to answer the demands of the people, they have been obliged, after circulating a large impression, to print a second edition. A particular instance of this kind is related by Kircher, with respect to a Christian catechism.[2] Should these methods, however, be thought precarious, there is one still more certain, and no less at our command. In the factories at Macao and Canton, there are gentlemen, some of whom are known to the author, who feel a great veneration for the sacred oracles. To these gentlemen, let a given number of copies be sent for distribution. Conscientious Chinese and Europeans, in different parts of the empire, may be sought out, and made depositaries for the interior: and as much as possible, let each person employed to distribute them, introduce the work as an article of barter. Merchants who come from every part of the empire to Canton, may thus be employed as the instruments of scattering the divine seed through the whole kingdom; and it will considerably facilitate the circulation, to request each depositary to introduce the work among booksellers; who, by being allowed a large profit, will promote the sale of it with peculiar industry. There

[1] This may serve to illustrate the subject: but it will be necessary to employ every prudent precaution, in dispersing the copies; that they may not be thrown away, but put into the hands of those persons who are most likely to study them.——(*Committee.*)

[2] Sed quod maximo animarum fructu universum Sinicum Imperium illustravit, fuit *Catechismus*, qui quantos in cordibus *Sinensium* sanctæ compunctionis de præterita perfidè transacta vita motus concitaverit; non dico apud plebem, sed cui tantoperè interest, apud maximos Monarchiæ Literatos, Mandarinos, Colaos, & Regii Palatii Eunuchos, cæterosque vix explicari potest: siquidem fama Libri vulgata, cum exemplaria non suppeterent, in omnibus ferè Provinciis, novis impressionibus liber ita longè latèque diffusus fuit, ut non esset angulus, quo lux evulgata veritatis Christianæ non pervaderet.—Kircheri China Illustrata, p. 118.

are no laws to prevent the circulation of the divine word, nor any to prohibit the study thereof. A disposition to read is general; and if a catechism was read with so much avidity in every corner of the kingdom, it is very reasonable to conclude, that the New Testament, a book of which they have heard so much, sent to them from a nation of whose skill and knowledge they have the highest opinion, would meet with a reception as candid and a perusal no less careful. Besides, God has ever honored his own word, when providence has in any country provided for its translation; and should he send it to China, we may hope he will not send it in vain. His own promise justifies the expectation. "As the rain comes down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater, so shall his word be, that goeth forth out of his mouth; it shall not return unto him void, but it shall accomplish that which he pleases, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto he sent it."

The sacred seed being widely scattered in China, would prepare the way for Missionaries to go over, at some future time, with the prospect of great success. It is difficult to conceive whether much advantage can attend any mission, where the people are without the divine testimony in their hands: but let the sacred volume be put into the hands of the Chinese, or any other civilized Heathens, and allow them a few years to examine the purity of its morals; the sublimity of its doctrines; and the benevolence of its designs; and we may hope to hear them say, "Come over and help us," for "How can we understand these things, except some man guide us?" A wide field would thus open for cultivation! Its language is easily learnt,[1] and is the

[1] This fact has been generally disputed; but Magaillans, who resided in the country for many years, must be allowed a far better judge than those who never left their native isle; and his words are, 'I cannot forbear to assert, the Chinese language is more easy than the Greek, the Latin, or any other of the European languages At least, it cannot be denied, that it is much more easy than the language of other countries, where our society is employed in missions, which is an advantage of no small consideration. Nor is this a thing to be questioned, as my sentiments are conformable to reason and experience. For in the first place, it is most certain that there is nothing more conducive to the acquiring of a language than the memory, and that that language must be the most easy, that has fewest words; as a small number of words is more easily retained than a large number. Now the Chinese language is the most concise of all others, not being composed of much more than 320 monosyllables;

same through the whole empire. The characters of it are understood by the neighbouring states of Tonquin, Cochin-China, and the islands of Lien-Kien, and Formosa. And the religious toleration of this empire, is exceeded only by that of Great Britain and America. For while the emperor and nobles worship *Tien* or *Chang-Te*, the populace in general worship *Foe*. Mahometanism has long established itself, and continues to spread in the heart of the empire, without opposition. Jews have for many centuries subsisted in the centre of the kingdom, and have exercised in peace their peculiar rites; and however different the creed of Christians, and their mode of worship have been from those peculiar to the natives, they have never been persecuted on the ground of their non-conformity in religious ceremonies; but only in consequence of their disobedience to established laws.

Since the days of *Cham-hi* there has never been so favorable an opportunity of introducing the Scriptures, and establishing Christianity in China as now. *Ka-King*, the fifteenth son of *Kien Long*, has succeeded his father in the government. He is learned and generous; and immediately after taking the reins of government, gave full liberty to the Missionaries to open their churches, and exercise the

whereas the Greek and Latin contain an infinite number of words, of tenses, of moods, numbers, persons, &c. But the Chinese language requires only a memory to retain the accents, which are, as it were, the form which distinguishes the signification of words, and to learn how to pronounce three hundred monosyllables.

In the second place it is most certain, that he who will industriously, and by a good method, apply himself to the study of the Chinese language, may be able, in a year's time, to understand and speak it very well. And we find by experience, that our fathers, who are at present employed in the mission, at the end of two years, became so perfect in the language, that they were able to confess, catechise, preach, and compose, with as much ease as in their own native tongue; though there is not the least resemblance between their language and ours; and that the fathers are generally persons far advanced in years.'—Nouvelle Relation De la Chine,—par le R. P. Gabriel Magaillans, p. 96. See the Translation, p 78—See also Lettres Edifiantes, vol. 22, p. 387.—Astley's Collection of Voyages, &c. vol. 3, p. 503.

That this representation is correct, I have no doubt; for my very respectable friend, Monsieur ————, who spent seven years in the country, learnt it sufficiently well in twelve months, to catechise, preach, &c. &c.

Les caractères ou lettres des Goréens sont les mêmes que ceux des Chinois; mais la prononciation en est différente; ensorte que les missionnaires et tous les Chinois qui connoissent les caractéres Chinois peuvent communiquer par écrit avec les Coréens qui se servent de ces mêmes caractéres; Les Coréens sont aussi en état de lire et de comprendre les livres de Religion écrits en lettres Chinoises par les Missionaires.—Relation de l'etablissement du Christianisme dans le Royaume de Corée.

functions of their religion without restraint. And when the Bishop of Pekin and two Missionaries who held the rank of Mandarines in the tribunal of Mathematics, were accused of not offering sacrifices before the body of the deceased Emperor, he declared, that 'The Europeans of Pekin are sincere, upright men, and attached to their religion; and must not therefore be disturbed on account of our ceremonies; but be permitted to observe all the rules of their religion.'[1] Two Missionaries have also been recalled to the palace, who had been driven from it before the death of *Kien-Long*, and he declared, that 'they had been unjustly expelled.'[2] And the Mandarines themselves are now friendly towards the Christians, and pronounce their religion good.[3] Was there ever a wider door open, or a more evident call in providence to send the gospel to an heathen nation? Shall we not be inexcusable before God, if we allow this extraordinary opportunity to pass unimproved?

From China, a door would be opened to all the dependant and surrounding kingdoms. To the trackless country of the Tartars on the north; to the extensive kingdom of *Tibet* on the west; to the populous states of *Cochin-China*, *Tonquin*, *Laos*, *Ava*, *Pegu*, *Siam*, and *Malacca*, on the south; and to *Corea*, and the islands of *Japan*, *Formosa*, and the *Phillippines*, on the east. This vast field comprehends nearly one half of the human race. How much is it to be deplored, that it has been so long neglected!

[1] State of religion in China, &c. since 1796, p. 29.
[2] Idem 30. [3] Idem 27.

May 1801.

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Proper Form of a Donation to the Society by Will.

Item, I *do hereby give and bequeath the sum of unto the Treasurer for the time being of a voluntary society meeting in London, commonly called or known by the name of "The Society for Missions to Africa and the East;" the same to be paid within months next after my decease out of my personal estate, in trust, to be applied to the uses and purposes of that Society.*

STATE OF THE SOCIETY'S FUND

from APRIL 1799 to MAY 1801.

CASH RECEIVED. DR.	£.	s.	d.	PER CONTRA. CR.	£.	s.	d.
To Annual Subscriptions . . .	177	19	0	By Printing, Stationary, Books, &c. .	95	16	1
To Donations	734	0	8	By Balance in the Treasurer's Hands .	816	3	7
	£911	19	8		£911	19	8

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